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白米良
shirakome ryo
illust.たかやKi
Takayaki
ありふれた職業で
ARIFURETA SHOKUGYOU DE SEKAISAIKYOU
世界最強
OVERLAP

# Arifureta Shokugyou de Sekai Saikyou

**Volume 7**

**Author: Chuuni Suki**

**Illustrator: TakayaKi**

**Translate: japtem**

**Epub: Henkanepubs**

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# Chapter 1 : Goddess Advent?

Ul town. The mountain range area in the North and Uldeia lake in the West brought abundant resources to the town. Currently, the town was encircled by an “outer wall” that didn’t exist last night as the town was wrapped in a strange atmosphere.

This “outer wall” was something Hajime instantly built. Using the magic-driven two-wheeler, he ran around the town’s outer circumference and transmuted the “outer wall” without leveling the land. First of all, the wall’s height was only four meters tall because it was the range limit of Hajime’s transmutation, it was not a really tall one. If it was a big-sized demonic beast, it would easily be able to climb over the wall. Tentatively, there’s no problem because it made the people feel better in such an emergency. To begin with, Hajime wouldn’t depend on such a wall.

The thing about the approaching army of tens of thousands of demonic beasts was already known to the townspeople. Considering the demonic beasts’ movement speed, the vanguard would arrive right before evening. Naturally, the townspeople panicked. People began to insult the town leaders including the mayor; others cried and collapsed on where they were, people closely embraced the person next to them, some scrambled to escape even among companions, and there were those who started to blame each other. Tomorrow, this town would be destroyed and they knew they’d lose their lives if they stayed here, so they didn’t have the luxury to remain calm. The way they were acting couldn’t be helped.

But there was someone who made them regain their composure. It was Aiko. Finally arriving at the town, the guard Knights received the briefing and they shouted “Goddess of Good Harvest.” With her dignified appearance showing she didn’t fear anything, coupled with her originally high popularity made the people regain their composure for now. Hatayama Aiko, in a certain way, was more hero-like than a hero.

The people who regained their composure divided into two groups. Those who wouldn’t throw away their hometown and would share the same fate as this town; the stay-behind group. The other one

was as planned in the beginning, escaping to safety until rescue came; the shelter group. Even among the stay-behind group, a lot of women and children were put into the shelter. They believed Aiko's words that the demonic beasts would be repulsed, and they wondered if they could help somehow and the stay-behind men decided to help while the wives and children would stay inside the shelter in case of an emergency. Although it passed midnight, the appearance of people embracing each others for separation in tears could be seen everywhere.

The shelter group went out of the town while carrying their luggages before dawn. The sun had raised high now, the people were divided between those who prepared for the battle and those who took a nap. Most of the stay-behind group believed in the "Goddess of Good Harvest"'s party, even so, we will protect our town ourselves!, we'll do what we can! , they were filled with such strong spirits.

Even if the people had decreased, there was more liveliness than usual so Hajime sat on the instant rampart behind the town, it was unknown where he was looking as he looked at the distance. Naturally, by his sides were Yue and Shia. They sat beside Hajime, they thought of something, then the two quietly drew closer to him.

Them, Aiko, the students, Tio, Will, David, and several guard Knights arrived there. Even though he noticed Aiko and the others approaching, he didn't turn around and made David and the Knights frown, but Aiko called on him earlier than them.

"Nagumo-kun, how are your preparations? Did you need something else?"
"No, there's no problem, sensei."

Of course Hajime simply answered so without turning around. Unable to endure his attitude, David snapped on him.

"Oi, you. What's with your attitude towards Aiko… towards your honored teacher. Normally, I wouldn't overlook the details about the artifact you carry and the details about your method of repulsing the army of demonic beasts, but I didn't do that because Aiko had asked me earnestly, you know? At least…"

“David-san. Can you keep quiet for now?”

“Uh… affirmative…”

However, when Aiko told him to “shut up” he dejectedly shut his mouth. His appearance was just like a dog. Even though he wasn’t a demi-human, one could see dog-ears and a tail. Now, those things seemed to hang down dejectedly because the owner was angry.

“Nagumo-kun. About the black-robed man…”

Apparently, that’s the subject. Anguish oozed out from Aiko’s words.

“Are you going to confirm his identity? Even if I find him, you’re telling me to not kill him, right?”

“… Yes. It’s necessary to confirm his identity. That’s… if it’s an unreasonable thing for Nagumo-kun…”

“For the time being, I’ll just bring him here.”

“Eh?”

“I’ll bring the black robe to sensei. Sensei is thinking as a teacher… so I’ll do just that.”

“Nagumo-kun… thank you very much.”

Aiko was a little surprised because of the unexpected cooperation from Hajime. Hajime didn’t even turn around even now, and thinking Hajime had a lot to think about, she decided to receive his goodwill. She muttered I am powerless as she sighed secretly, then Aiko said her gratitude with a bitter smile.

It looked like Aiko’s talk was over, and this time Tio moved forward and called Hajime.

“Fumu, I wonder if it’s okay. This one mas-… gohonh! matter to talk… is a request, will you hear it?”

“? … Tio huh”

“Th-Thou, don’t tell me that this one’s existence was forgotten… haa haa, there’s also something like this…”

Because it was an unfamiliar voice, Hajime inadvertently looked over his shoulder, and there was black clothes with golden embroidery which resembled a kimono and splendidly slipped down, white and smooth shoulders together with an enchanting valley, followed by the beautiful leg which peeped from the cut from the knee; a black-haired, golden-eyed beautiful woman. For a moment, his eyes seemed dubious and he remembered with “Aa, now that you mention” then called her name. Obviously, Tio whose existence was forgotten was far from getting angry, she was blushing and her breathing became rough. Her “something like this” was unknown, but it’d be better to not asked her about it.

“Nnh, nnh! That’s, after this battle end and thou sent Will back, art thou going to continue to travel?”

“Aa, that’s so.”

“Fumu, this one’s request is that… this one want to accompany thou…”

“I refuse.”

“… Haa haa. I-Immediate answer just as expected. As expected of mas-…kohonh! Of course it’s not for free! I’ll call thou “Master” from now own, and dedicated all of this one to thee! Body and mind, all of them! How is it?”

“Just return, rather just return into the ground.”

While spreading her arms, Tio declared to become Hajime slave with an expression of ecstasy, and Hajime, who looked at her as if looking at a filth, immediately casted her away. Tio’s body shook again. Her cheek became rose-colored. No matter who saw her, they’d thought of her as a pervert. Even the surrounding people were taken aback. Especially Yue who had strong yearning and respect towards Ryuujin tribe, her noh mask-like expression crumbled with all of her feelings.

“That’s… cruel… Master was the one who turned this one’s body into this… this one want thou to take the responsibility!”

Everyone became “Eh!?” as they looked at Hajime. As expected, he couldn’t just leave that ridiculous and false accusation alone, Hajime immediately looked at Tio’s direction and he glared at her with veins popped. His glare asked what she meant by that.

“Au, to be seen as filth by those eyes again… haa haa… gulp… that’s, look, isn’t this one strong?”

Her body shuddered again because of Hajime’s glare, then Tio began to explain her thought process that reached extraordinary conception to declared herself as Hajime’s slave.

“Even in my hometown, this one only have one, two fights, and this one’s particular endurance surpassed them. That’s why, to be held down by other and even to felt pain-like pain never happened until now and only until now.”

Because the guard Knights nearby didn’t know Tio came from Ryuujin tribe, Tio’s words trickle down with some omission.

“That’s why, when this one fought Master, it’s the first time this one was knocked down, being held down, and tasted the pain and defeat for the first time. That’s right, that fist which resonated with this body’s core! The impacts that always aimed at unpleasant points! The pain that could felt throughout this one’s body… haa haa”

Although Tio said that herself, the Knights who didn’t know she was from Ryuujin race turned their gaze towards Hajime as if they looked at a criminal. If ones heard it objectively, it was a completely like a woman assaulting case. “How could you assaulted such beautiful woman!,” was the noise raised by the Knights. They didn’t plainly blamed him because they felt pity on the victim; Tio. Rather, the Knights with strong sense of justice were perplexed because she look so happy.

“… In other words, Hajime opened a new door for you?”

“That’s it! This one’s body is already useless without Master!”

“… Gross”

Yue’s expression was distorted as if she saw something unpleasant, her tone no longer carried respect when Tio said her agreement. Spontantly, Hajime revealed his feeling. He was completely taken aback.

“Furthermore…”

Tio’s perverted look suddenly changed as she began fidgeting while she held her hip with her hands in embarrassment.

“… This one’s first time was stolen already.”

With those words, everyone’s faces showed their surprise as they looked at Hajime. Hajime said “There’s no such thing,” as he shook his neck while his cheeks were convulsing.

“This one had decided to only admit stronger man than this one as companion… but, there’s no such person in this one’s hometown… To be defeated, and to be held down like that… was the first time… to suddenly used this one’s ass… Moreover, such intensity… that’s why thou art this one’s Master. This one want thou to take responsibility.”

Tio’s eyes were moistened as she looked at Hajime while holding her butt. The Knights’ eyes said, “This guy just a criminal after all!,” and continued with “To suddenly attacked the ass-,” as they talked and floated shuddering expressions. Even Aiko and the others who knew the truth glared at Hajime with blaming eyes. Even Yue and Shia’s expressions by his side said, “That’s a little-,” as they averted their gazes. Even before the approaching of the army, Hajime was dragged into a situation where he was surrounded by enemies on all sides.

“Y-You, didn’t you have things to do? That’s why you went out from your hometown.”

Because Yue and the others averted their gazes, Hajime replied desperately about “Ryuujin race’s investigation.”

“Umu. There’s no problem. It absolutely will become more efficient if this one is beside Master. It’s just like hitting two birds with one stone… look, aren’t there various things happened in travel? It’s okay to let out the frustration on this one, okay? It’s also okay to do it stronger. Isn’t that a good thing for Master?”

“There’s only demerit with a pervert by my side.”

Tio clung to him, but Hajime just cast her away. It followed by the guard Knights’ resentment, female students who saw Hajime as a maggot, male students who felt a complex about women from different world as they looked at Hajime with envy, Aiko who started to preach about illicit sexual relationship, and Will who somehow looked at Hajime with eyes of respect. Inside such chaotic situation, the army kept approaching them, and when Hajime started to became tired of it, they finally came.

” ! … They’ve arrive huh.”

Hajime suddenly turned his gaze towards the mountain range area in the north. He displayed his narrowed eyes as he looked at the distance. Even though they weren’t in location that could be seen by naked eyes, Hajime could clearly saw it from the image from Unmanned Reconnaissance Planes which displayed on his “Magic Eye Crystal.”

There was a crowd of demonic beasts who completely wrapped the ground. Beside human-type demonic beasts like Brutal, there were three-four meter big and black wolf-like demonic beasts, and there were also lizard-like demonic beasts with six legs, phyton-like demonic beasts with needles protruded from their backs, mantis-like demonic beasts with four scythes, huge spider-like demonic beasts with numerous tentacles grown all over their bodies, and there were pure white, two headed snakes. It truly a rich variation of demonic beasts and their march made the ground trembled as cloud of dust was scattered by their tremendous force. Their number seemed to have increased further since the time he confirmed it at the mountain. It was a large army of around 50,000-60,000.

In addition, there were also flying-type demonic beasts above the

large crowd. They could be compared to the Pteranodon. One of the tens of pteranodon-fakers was especially big, and a person shadow could slightly be seen on it. It was probably the black robed man. Although Aiko's manner showed she didn't want to believe it, it was Shimizu Yukitoshi 8 or 9 out of ten cases.

"… Hajime."
"Hajime-san."

Yue and Shia noticed something approached them from the change in Hajime's atmosphere. They called out to Hajime. Hajime turned his gaze towards the two and he nodded once, following that he turned his glance towards Aiko and the others whose faces filled with tension behind him.

"They've come. Although it's considerably earlier than the schedule, it'll be 30 minutes until their arrival. The number are more than 50,000. They are mix of more than two kind of demonic beasts."

Hearing the number of demonic beasts had increased further, Aiko and the others turned paler. Towards Aiko and the others who looked uneasy, Hajime jumped above the wall and he displayed a fearless smile over his shoulder.

"Don't make that face, sensei. There'll be no problem because there's only addition of several tens of thousand. Just as planned, those who can fight should stand by the "wall side" in case of emergency. Well, there'll be no turn for them though."

Without any fighting mood, Hajime told them to leave it to him, and Aiko narrowed her eyes as they slightly sparkling.

"I understand… though I don't know what I can do just by standing here just as you've said… somehow please be safe…"

As Aiko said that, the guard Knights said, "I wonder if it's okay to leave it to Hajime" and "Even though it's too late, we should go to the shelter," as they ran while carrying the information towards the town. Even the students looked at Hajime with complexed eyes once, then ran after Aiko. Beside Hajime and his party, the remaining were only Will and Tio.

Will was talking about something to Tio, then he ran after Aiko and the others after he bowed to Hajime. Tio answered Hajime's questioning face with a wry smile.

"Because this one will use all of this one's power to overcome this incident, then at the very least this ones wanted Will-boy to forgive this one about the adventurers, that kind of talk… that's why this one will help thee. What, even if this one's magic power isn't recovered enough for Dragon Form, this one's flame and wind are quite the real deal, kay?"

Ryuujin race was called odd existence by the church, and although they could be considered as demi-human race, they could directly manipulated magic power just like demonic beasts. Therefore, even though she wasn't an all attribute, chantless, no magic circle genius like Yue, there were attributes she excelled at, and she seemed to be capable to do it chantless just like Yue.

Tio self-claimed that as she vehemently stuck out her chest to deliberately emphasized it, but Hajime just silently throw a ring made of magic-crystallization stone. Although Tio showed a questioning look, she opened her eyes wide when she understood it was a magic power tank made of God Crystal, then she looked at Hajime with moistened eyes and speak with a shaking voice.

"Master… to propose right before a fight… this one, of course, this one's answer is…"

"As if. I am only lending it to you because you have the duty as the battery, no more, no less. Rather, did you just tried to be the fool like a certain someone just now?"

"… I see, that black history."

Yue dropped her shoulders with unpleasant expression because her thought pattern was somewhat similar to this pervert. Hajime's objection was completely ignored as Tio put the ring on her finger and gazed at it with a grin while she was also being ignored by him, and finally the large group of demonic beasts could be seen by naked eyes. People with bows and magic arrays in their hands gathered on the "outer wall." The ground began to tremor, and

demonic beasts' roars could be heard together with dust storm in the distance. Some people started to pray to the god and some people wore expressions as if they'd be dead at any time.

Having seen that, Hajime came forward. Using transmutation, he created the speech stand by piling up the ground. He didn't thought of easing people's anxiety because it'd simply turned into panic if friendly fire happened.

Something suddenly climbed on the foundation outside the wall, and the people who thought it was one of the approaching demonic beasts were glaring at it, but they were bewildered because where their gazes gathered was a white-haired, eye-patched boy.

After he confirmed everyone's gazes were turned to him, Hajime inhaled then speak with a voice that could reached the heaven.

"Listen! O brave people of Ul town! Our victory is nothing but confirmed!"

Wondering what was suddenly said, the townspeople looked at each other. Hajime looked at their confusion with narrowed eyes and continued his words.

"If you ask for the reason, it is because the Goddess has taken side with us! That's right, it's the "Goddess of Good Harvest" everyone know; Aiko-sama!"

Hearing those words, everyone began to raised noises with, Aiko-sama? Goddess of Good Harvest? . Aiko whose accompanied by the guard Knights behind and had been helped guiding the people became stupefied.

"As long as Aiko-sama is beside us, we are unbeatable! Aiko-sama is the living god send by the heaven as an ally to humanity, and brought to us "Good Harvest" and "Victory"! I am Aiko-sama's sword and also her shield, I am here to answer her desire to protect everyone! Look! This is my power which guided by Aiko-sama!"

As he said that, Hajime pull out Schlagen from the void and anchors from its barrel pierced the ground to fixed its position. Following

that, he crouched and the townspeople observed him as he aligned his sight towards the vanguard of demonic beasts, the pteranodon-fakers… and he pulled the trigger.

A bright red spark released from Schlagen and accompanied with killing intent, a blinding light ran through the sky in an instant. It crushed one of the pteranodon-fakes which was several kilometers away, and several others on the surrounding descended into the ground because their wings were pulverized by the after-effect. As is, Hajime continued to fired for the second and third times, and the demonic beasts in the sky were exterminated. Then, he purposely altered his aim and the rather huge pteranodon-fake started to fall as it was confused by what happened, moreover the black robed man who rode on it was blown by the after-effect. The black robe blown into the air and he tried to resist the fall.

He didn't have the time to bring the black robe to Aiko until all of the demonic beasts were dealt with, so he choose to defeat the fastest ones to escape for now. Although Aiko would be angry if she heard he shot him down, he didn't care at the least if that person was hurt after all. At least Aiko might not noticed it because he shot it down while they were still far away.

Hajime finished exterminating the demonic beasts in the sky and he calmly turned around. There were the appearances of the townspeople who became dumbfounded and slack-jawed.

"All hail Aiko-sama!"

Hajime raised words of praise for Aiko as his last duty. Then, in the next moment…

"""""""""All hail Aiko-sama! Long live Aiko-sama! Cheers for Aiko-sama! All hail Aiko-sama!"""""""""
"""""""""All hail Goddess! Long live Goddess! Cheers for Goddess! All hail Goddess!"""""""""

Inside Ul town, it was no longer just her nickname, a true goddess was bornt. Apparently, their anxiety had blown away as everyone in the town raise shouts of praise as their shining eyes looked towards Aiko, the goddess; their hope. In the distance, Aiko's face

turned crimson as she trembled. Her eyes immediately turned towards Hajime and her small mouth moved as it said, “What.Do.You.Mean.By.This!”.

Hajime turned towards the large crowd of demonic beasts again. Hajime pushed such façade to Aiko because he had his own reason. First, Hajime’s activity would surely make the Church and the Kingdom move in the future, and because Aiko would confronted them if they tried to harm Hajime, it’d be better for her words as “Goddess of Good Harvest” carried power at that time. If they could overcome the town’s emergency with Aiko-sama(…)’s power, then the townspeople would started their own rumour and the name “Goddess of Good Harvest” would surely grabbed people’s hearts further. At that time, she wasn’t only a useful talent for the kingdom but also the goddess that people supported, so the Church and the Kingdom couldn’t easily put their hands on her as her words carried more power.

The second reason was simply because the townspeople would only become frightened and hostile if they were shown a big power. That’s why even if they showed their power, the townspeople’s wonder and fear would be relieved when they remembered it came from the goddess who supported them, and the hostility could be changed to goodwill. Even if they were chased by the Church, there’d be people who cooperated with them… and that’s a good thing.

The third reason was simply to declare that he’d took the full brunt of everything aimed towards “Nagumo Hajime’s teacher.”

His number one reason was so that the townspeople would not panicked and did something wrong, and he immediately thought to do that. Afterwards Aiko would told him various things, but there were also merits for Aiko and she should overlook it because it was the result of her decision… it’d be okay to just escape once everything’s over.

With townspeople’s shouts that they wouldn’t be defeated by demonic beasts because of Aiko on his back, along with Aiko’s piercing glance, and the guard Knights floated smiles as they muttered “Just what, that guys understood well what we meant”

and looked at him, Hajime took out two Metherai's ammunition belt from "Treasure Box" and put them on his shoulders as he advanced ahead.

On her right was Yue as always, on his left was Shia with Orkan on her shoulder which Hajime loaned to her, and beside him was also Tio who absent-mindedly staring at the ring of magic crystallization stone. On the horizon, the pteranodon-fakers who fell to the ground as if they weren't related to all of this and demonic beasts who marched single-mindedly filled their view.

Hajime looked at Yue. Yue returned Hajime's gaze and silently nodded. Hajime looked at Shia. Shia with her rabbit ears stood straight nodded full of confidence. Tio on his side… he just put her aside.

Hajime returned his gaze towards the large crowd and floated a smile, and he mutter without any eagerness.

"Then, let's do it."

# Chapter 2 : Ul Town's Trampling Drama

(What's with this… what the heck THIS IS!!)

The large crowd of tens of thousand demonic beasts came to attack Ul town from the rear side. The instantly built moat, and the boy, Shimizu Yukitoshi, who desperately shrunk his trembling body as he hysterically invoked barrier, could only flapped his mouth as he couldn't believed the disastrous scene in front of him. An unbelievable spectacle, and the reality he didn't want to believe, he repeatedly cursed with words that wouldn't come out.

That's right, the one behind the large crowd of demonic beasts was unmistakably Aiko's missing student, Shimizu Yukitoshi. By the contract he exchanged with a certain man, he planned to frame Aiko and the others for Ul's annihilation. However, the townspeople whom he thought would be easily twisted and crushed were still unharmed by the completely unforeseen and threatening ambush. Rather, the current progress brought forth was just like a painting of hell for Shimizu's side.

DOuRURURURURURURURURU!!!
DOuRURURURURURURURURU!!!

As such peculiar sounds resounded in the battlefield, numerous flashes filled with enough killing intent speeded along the sky. The flashes reached their target without giving any time to wink. No matter how strong the several species of demonic beasts who roared and made the earth rumbled were, they were changed into lump of meat in a moment without any chance to resist. The 12,000 death per minute became a merciless "wall" as they approached and they pierced their targets without such lukewarm words of "one bullet one body" as they went through several tens of more demonic beasts in the back.

The pierced demonic beasts, ignoring the law of inertia, were burst and collapsed on the spots in general. The demonic beasts immediately spreaded out to left and right to escape the trail of

deaths. But the shooter, Hajime, naturally wouldn't let them escape as he fired the second round from Metherai just like a folding fan. The "barrage" released and it approached all of the demonic beasts just like a rampart. In the blink of time, the mountain of corpses and river of blood were built.

In addition, on Hajime's left side was Shia with Orkan on her shoulders and shouted, "Fly however you want~," as she pulled the trigger. Pashu rang out in succession as the rocket launcher fired.

On the contrary of those stupid sounds, the warheads passed into the middle of demonic beasts as they leave trails of sparks and caused huge explosions which blown the demonic beasts within ten meters. The demonic beasts' bodies near the ground zero were turned into pieces while the intense shock waves damaged the bones and internal organs of the ones farther. Furthermore, the demonic beasts that were incapable of even standing up were treaded and crushed to death.

Even though she exhausted all of the ammo, Shia reloaded it with the piles of warheads on her side from Hajime and fired them successively. The fired rockets exploded overhead the demonic beast just like grenades, and numerous brightly burning flames were scattered below. Just like incendiary grenade, the liquid tars which kept burning at 3,000 oC were extracted from Flame Crystal and poured down just like a great rain towards the demonic beasts whose bodies were burnt to ashes. They screamed and struggled as the flame which carried scorching destruction spreaded and swallowed the surroundings demonic beasts. Comparing the number of demonic beasts that exploded and the ones turned to ashes, in the area Shia was in charge of… were two against one.

Tio was positioned at Shia's right side. Her outstretched hands were releasing black aurora which scorched the surrounding air since a while ago. It was the Breath from her dragon form. Apparently, she was capable of shooting it even in human form. The black flame which was capable to press on Hajime's full power, defense flew and instantly penetrated the large crowds in the rear into annihilation. As is, Tio moved her arms horizontally and the black bombardment moved according to her arms and annihilated everything.

After the bombardment was stopped, nothing remained except the gouged ground. In exchange, it should be considerably exhausting. Tio's shoulders were dropped as her body trembled. However, she immediately straightened her posture after she kissed the ring in her finger. She was taking out magic power's stock inside the ring of magic crystallization she stone received from Hajime. Because of Breath attack, the vanguard demonic beasts around the area she was in charge of were annihilated, and Tio who could take it easy used magic with comparatively smaller consumption rate.

"Wind which blowing wildly, the torrent which burn in crimson, "Worldly Flame Tempest"."

For the sake of suppressing magic power consumption rate, she chanted and heightened her concentration. Following that, flame tornado magic was released. Its scale was the same as F4 class tornado on earth. The swirling flame of ten meters in diameter advanced towards the group of demonic beasts and the surrounding demonic beasts were blown up. The demonic beasts thrown up into the air didn't have any way to struggle and they jumped into the flame as is. Following that, what was thrown out from the crimson tornado were ashes scattered like gray snow. The tornado which turned everything into ashes was trampling the battlefield without reserve.

Yue's annihilation power on Hajime's right side surpassed them. Even though Hajime and the others started the attack, Yue stood still and had her eyes closed. The demonic beasts, who realized the attack from the right side was thinner, gathered there to escape the storm of destruction and invaded from the right-wing. The marching demonic beasts were crowding and came charging. At the moment, their distance was about 500 meters. Yue opened her eyes and slowly raised her right hand, and with two whispered words, she recited the name of the powerful magic as if declaring it to the world.

""Threat Destroyer""

It was the trigger to invoke the Age of God's magic. It was the magic granted by Miledi Raisen which interfere with one law of the world, "gravity movement." For the vampire princess who held the

natural talent for magic, she needed a “long time” to control her magic power and to fix the image because it was a difficult magic she couldn’t invoke immediately, yet.

Along with Yue’s chant, the same swirling, dark orb just like the one when they fought the black dragon appeared above the approaching demonic beasts. However, there were differences as the orb shape was changed. The orb became thinner and thinner until its length reached 500 meters squarely above the demonic beasts. Following that, the dark ceiling which blocked the sunlight immediately fell before the demonic beasts.

In the next moment, it could be said “the demonic beasts were annihilated from the world.” In truth, the Ul’s townspeople behind the wall could only dumbfoundedly watch what Hajime and his party did as a trampling play; there’s no other way to look at it.

The truth they seen made it looked like a simple thing. The dark ceiling fell into the the group of demonic beast, the demonic beast sunk into the ground as is, and a 10 meter crater with length of 500 meters was created. The demonic beasts that crowding and charging didn’t have the time to understand what happened as all of their bodies were crushed and became stains at the bottom of the ground. In an aspect, it became just like the dump for demonic beasts’ corpses. With only an attack from Yue, nearly 2,000 demonic beasts were killed in an instant, they were unfortunate as the demonic beasts’ bodies were turned into pieces with their entrails scattered with this above the borderline technique.

The following demonic beasts fell one by one into the huge hole where the ground suddenly disappeared. Unable to null their charging momentum, they were pushed from the back. In the blink of time, several thousands of demonic beasts fell into the huge hole, then Yue once again interfere with gravity using magic power which taken out from magic crystallization stone. Demonic beasts’ corpses were piled on top of demonic beasts’ corpses.

The blowing wind carried the smell of the trampled demonic beasts’ blood towards the town. Such strong smell made the townspeople one by one unable to suppressed their nausea, even so the townspeople raised an uproar because of the unreal “overwhelming

power” and “trampling play.” WAaAAA—— , shout of joy raised all over the town.

The town leaders and the guard Knights remained dumbfounded as they saw Hajime and his party’s power for the first time. The students who once again witnessed that power could strongly feel the “differences” between them as they showed expressions with mixed feelings. Originally, they were going protect the people from such demonic beasts, at leasts they first objected to defending from the same location as the townspeople where they could only see the back of a classmate that was looked down as an “incompetent.” That’s why their mind became complexed.

Aiko was only praying single-mindedly. For the safety of Hajime and his party. At the same time, her expression was distorted because the things about her had became too late to repair. With such gruesome battlefield in front of her, the contradiction with her sweetness strike on people’s hearts.

Before long, the number of demonic beasts were remarkably decreased and the northern ground which was hidden by the large crowd could be seen, and Tio finally fell. Having exhausted the magic power from magic crystallization stone, she couldn’t move because of magic power exhaustion.

“Muu, this one will stop here… already, no fireball can be made… sorry.”

While she collapsed in prostration, only her face looked at Hajime which filled with apologizes and Tio’s complexion had passed from blue as it turned white. Literally, the consumption of magic power she did could brought about her death.

“… It’s enough. Looks like you aren’t just a pervert. Leave the rest to me and sleep as is.”

“… For Master to be gentle… though I thought I’d be insulted… No, about the whipping after this over… can I expect it?”

“Just die as is.”

With her face looked like the dead whose blood was extracted, Tio's body began to trembling by Hajime's words. Her expression was one of a satisfaction. Hajime looked at her as if he saw something disgusting and clicked his tongue, then he returned his gaze towards the group of demonic beasts.

Now, their number with scale of 10,000 had been reduced by 8,000 to 9,000. If remembering the large crowd in the beginning, the damages could be stated as a total annihilation. However, the demonic beasts were still made reckless charges. To be accurate, it seemed some of the demonic beasts were giving them commands. The ordinary demonic beasts completely obeyed them, following the commands from the leader of various species, and they charging in perplexion. Hajime was able to noticed that because their number had fallen.

Assuming Shimizu Yukitoshi as the culprit behind this incident, even if he carried some cheats, in truth, Hajime felt suspicious about it as he thought if he really could brainwashed such large crowd just like Tio. But, not all of the tens of thousands demonic beasts were brainwashed, by brainwashing the leaders of various species, he made the subordinates followed those leaders. It was quite efficient. However, there was still the doubt on how he gathered such number in a short time…

For now, he'd put that doubt aside. Because the leaders movements were monotonous and slow, even though there were some flexibilities along with the composition of demonic beasts who obeyed the repeated reckless commands, it'd be better for him to quickly kill those leaders. If he did that, the demonic beasts that faithful to their instinct would run away into the northern mountain because the difference of force from Hajime and his party was already carved into their body.

Hajime stared at the extermination weapon, Metherai, in his hands. Two smokes were raised and it seemed the cooling wouldn't make it in time. If he continued to attack more than this, it'd fell apart somewhere. Of course there was the possibility to restore it, but he couldn't do it instantly because it was a delicate objects. It was necessary to took some time to work precisely on it. That's why, because it'd be a hassle, he switched to more appropriate method of

attack.

“Yue, your remaining magic power?”

“… Nn, only two of magic crystallization stones left… the consumption rate of that gravity magic was more than expected. Training is needed.”

“No no, didn’t you just kill more than 20.000 alone? That’s enough. I’ll just pinpoint attack the leftover. Please cover me.”

“Nnh.”

Even though Hajime’s words were few, Yue immediately nodded in acknowledgement and carried it out. They were in harmony. Satisfied by that, Hajime talked to Shia.

“Shia, did you understand the difference in the demonic beasts?”

“Yes, The manipulated demonic beasts just like Tio at that time and the weak-kneed demonic beasts, right?”

“Weak-kneed… yup, well, that’s right. Probably, those demonic beasts that look like Tio’s are the leaders of the groups. The others will run away if they are killed.”

“I see, because I don’t have any ammo left, it’s direct killing!”

“… Ah, aa. What can I say, you’ve become sturdier…”

“Of course. It is for the sake of being by the side of you two.”

Towards the smiling Shia, Hajime returned a wry smile which somehow feel like a gentle smile. However, he tightened his expression as he put Metherai inside the “Treasure Box” and took out Donner-Schlag. At the same time, Shia also put Orkan away and her hand reached Doryukken on her back.

The leaders of demonic beasts numbered around 100. Perhaps, because of the suicide assault, they began to lost their leadership on the subordinate demonic beasts as majority of them fall back.

The attacks from Metherai and Orkan, followed by Tio's magic might made them thought they had lost their chance, and the demonic beasts began to march back.

To cover Hajime and Shia' attack, Yue invoked her magic.

""Thunder Dragon""

Immediately a dragon of thunder that created violent sparks and raised roars of thunderbolts appeared from the heaven which shrouded by dark cloud, and it infringed the frontline from the right to the left. The golden dragon opened its huge mouth, and seeing the group of demonic beasts annihilated as they voluntarily jumped, the following demonic beasts once again flinching. At that chance, Hajime and Shia charge at the crowd at once.

DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh!

Hajime used "Ground Shrinker" as he dashed on the ground and successively fired Donner-Schlag. His eyes grasped the appearances from the small gap on the crowd, he fired the flashes of death and they reached the targets through the small gap as they hit right at the vital points without mercy.

Without even glancing at the demonic beasts in the frontline, somehow only the leaders in the back were mysteriously burst open one after another which made the surrounding demonic beasts halted. Then, a shadow suddenly appeared above one of the demonic beasts. Immediately, the demonic beasts looked up at the sky and there was a girl with fluttering rabbit ears and carrying a gigantic warhammer literally fell from the sky and jumped into the scene.

That girl was Shia, she stepped on the demonic beasts' heads and hopping just like a rabbit above the crowd. The last demonic beast's head she stepped on was crushed as she jumped grandly and she flew at once into the sky using Gravity magic to lightened her weight.

Following that, she turned around as she passed the zenith, she increased her weight several times at once and fall with tremendous

power. Her targeted point was of course the location where several leaders were stiffened. Her free fall speed was accelerated further as the reaction from the outburst when she pulled Doryukken's trigger, and she used body strengthening to the limit to put the highest power into her attack. Then, the hammer that could be called the destruction incarnated fall down without even losing its momentum.

"RYAaAAAA!!!"

DOoGAaAAAA!!!

The attack which accompanied with lovely shout was just like a meteorite. The Brutal-type leader who received the direct hit was crushed to death as its head immediately reached the ground while flesh and blood were scattered by the violent impact. The flesh and blood slipped into the ground and stones which blown by the impact and returned to the ground as fertilizer. Following that, the same fate visited the crowding demonic beasts in the surroundings. Doryukken's overwhelming impact made the ground and stones flew just like bullets and scattered the fleshes which also returned into the ground just like before.

Shia was in the bottom of the crater she made herself and she used the reaction from the outburst to pull Doryukken which buried on the ground and at the same time she used the high-speed movement to move towards the demonic beasts and once again attacked each group's leader.

As expected, she didn't have the heart to just naively let the demonic beasts that did whatever they please away, and Shia crushed the surrounding meat wall to death. Shia used Doryukken's designed gimmick to further extended the handle by more than one meter and used the outburst to do high-speed revolution just like a spinning top. Following that, Doryukken which carried enough centrifugal force blown away the approaching mixed wall of meat.

Countless Brutals fluttered as they were blown away radially. The girl with delicate appearance easily blown away the many times bigger demonic beasts as if they were pingpong ball. The spectacle was just like a joke. Shia restored her body pose from the flow of

gyration and she became depressed when she saw the targeted leaders were crushed from the gap of the blown away Brutals.

Then, in that moment, her rabbit ears caught a sound of something new approaching in high speed from the right rear. Without panicking, Shia timingly rotated her body and used Doryukken to intercept the ambush. But, the newcomers, demonic beasts with black-fur, four ruby-like eyes, and looked like wolves, were already expecting that as they immediately decelerated and splendidly avoid Shia's attack.

If they were normal demonic beasts, in theory they'd continued the attack and became corpses by the swung weapon. Actually, Shia also had thought of that as she concentrated her body strengthening on her legs, and she'd won by immediately jumping overhead the raid.

However, Shia's expectation was betrayed. Somehow the four-eyed wolves weren't jumped at Shia but Doryukken with their strong jaws as they used all of their might to pushed the ground to seal it. Of course such demonic beasts couldn't beat Shia's body strengthening. But, because she was surprised by the unexpected, her movement was sealed for a moment.

Thus the black, four-eyed wolves had enough time. The same kind of demonic beast was approaching as it opened its mouth filled with sharp fangs from Shia's back with a perfect timing. Shia opened her eyes wide and immediately released the body strengthening which concentrated on her legs towards her whole body. That because she was preparing to received the attacks.

At the moment those sharp fangs almost drenched by Shia's blood, something interrupted between Shia and the four-eyed wolf. With length of 60 cm and width of 40 cm, it was a metallic cross which middle part was just like a round shield. That cross prevented the demonic beast's mouth from biting Shia.

Gari gari sound resounded and the demonic beast desperately tried to crunch the foreign object that jumped out all of a sudden, but the cross that emitted weak red light wasn't daunted at all. In the next moment, the demonic beast's lower jaw was blown off accompanied

with roaring sound.

“GUuRUaAA!!!”

The cross soundlessly moved overhead the screaming and writhing demonic beast and a bullet pulverized the demonic beast’s head accompanied with another roaring sound. In addition,

ZUDONh!!

Hearing the firing sound, Shia lightened her grip on Doryukken. Shia looked back at the four-eyed wolves who temporary closed off her path and their abdomens and heads were also shot through as they crumbled by another two crosses which floating mid-air.

“”Shia, don’t relax your guard. Among the demonic beasts, there were some whose movement are obviously different. There’s not only brainwashed ones and the subordinates of demonic beasts. Take three of the Cross Bits with you. Annihilate the 27 on the right. The frontline will hold for five minutes for Yue.””

Shia finally caught up that she had escaped from the pinch and he received the “Telepathy” from Hajime. Hah , Shia who regained her senses was straightening herself and answered through the telepathy stone on her choker (Shia never thought of it as a collar).

“Roger! Also, I am saved. Thank you very much!”

“Ou, be careful.”

“… Fufu, recently, Hajime-san’s attitude becoming more and more softened. It is just one step away from it to become an accomplished fact!”

Having confirmed the communication was cut, Shia muttered that to herself as she smiled because the floating “Cross Bits” in the surroundings were as if they were protecting her. Following that, she psyched up and readied Doryukken, then she set out to annihilate the cautious leader which had different fur color from the demonic beasts from a while ago.

“Fuu, just as usual, she always got into some trouble, this girl…”

Muttering that, Hajime exterminated the demonic beasts with overwhelming force. There were four cross floating around Hajime.

“Cross Bit” was how Hajime called the floating crosses, they moved by the same principle as the Unmanned Reconnaissance Planes and their type specialized in attacking. Inside were loaded with gun and rifle bullet, they were operated using the bracelet where seven induction stones were installed. Moreover, the surface was covered with mineral which endowed with “Vajra” using Creation magic, so they could become strong shields as they reacted on the magic power from induction stone.

Hajime, who used Gun＝Kata as he pleased while manipulating the Cross Bits at the same time, unfolded a storm of attacks without any room of escape. Already, 40 of the demonic beasts’ leaders were killed and there were demonic beasts who began to escape from the full-powered “Pressure.”

Then, a human’s shadow who screaming something towards the escaping demonic beasts in the distance was seen by Hajime at the edge of his view. Because it only put out its head from the ground, for a moment he thought it was someone’s severed head, but Hajime used “Farsight” and he certainly saw it move. That head was covered with black robe.

The black robed man, Shimizu was throwing a tantrum just like a child as he shouted at the escaping demonic beasts, then he began to recite something as he held up the artifact staff received in Imperial Palace. Of course, because there was no obligation to wait for the chant completion, Hajime fired Donner in his spare time and the staff was blown off in the middle. As the after effect, Shimizu was knocked and collapsed into the hole on the ground.

Thus although he didn’t know what Shimizu was trying to do, the black, four-eyed, wolf-type demonic beasts who were hidden inside the crowd and patiently waiting for the decisive gap around Hajime jumped at once. As expected, they had the potential of coordination ability that couldn’t be compared to the surrounding demonic beasts. It made him remembered the two-tailed wolf from before.

Actually, Hajime feel they could be a good match if they fight

against the two-tailed wolf. Although they didn't have peculiar magic to manipulate thunder and simply had inferior offensive power compared to the two-tailed wolf, sometime, they evaded the location Hajime attacked as if they knew about it, so their peculiar magic must be something along "Prediction" system. Following that, their coordination would make them the same level as the two-tailed wolf… in other words, it wasn't strange for the demonic beasts to be in the so-called low layer of the Abyss.

Why such demonic beasts here? , though there was such a doubt, he undertaking attacks, so it was just unnecessary thought for now. Hajime temporarily averted his thought from eliminating the leaders of the demonic beasts and concentrated on defeating the 12 black, four-eyed wolves.

Front, back, left, and right, furthermore there were black, four-eyed wolves who began to attack from above, so he rotated his body like a top and successively fired Donner-Schlag. They used "Prediction" to evaded from their spots, and Hajime also used "Prediction" to attack their next location. Even so, he was surprised that there were some that still capable to evade. Similar to the two-tailed wolf, they must have a method of communication like telepathy among their companions, and there might be some who looked over the battlefield.

Avoiding Hajime's shots, the four-eyed wolf leaped from the back because of the small gap when he reloaded mid-air, and one of the Cross Bits expanded just like flower petal and blown it away. Using that demonic beasts as stepping stone was another four-eyed wolf as it jumped, and the Cross Bit immediately became a shield to obstructed it, then he shoot out the Shotgun from the elbow of his artificial left arm.

Inside the rain of flesh and blood, two Cross Bits concentrated barrage at one corner towards the encircling four-eyed wolves. When the encirclement opened by force, he slipped through using "Ground Shrinker" and shot to death the four-eyed wolves from the back which followed by Donner-Schlag further slaughtering another two because they had finished reloading.

Then, there was one that thrown away its body since the start and

hurled its attacked body as it jumped towards Hajime. Hajime evaded by jumping sideway, shot the lower part of the demonic beast that came flying and blown off the four-eyed wolf that charging from its back. Taking a passive approach, Hajime immediately stood up and the four-eyed wolves opened their big mouths as if they had waited for this moment, then they tried to crunch Hajime with their fangs. It was a perfect timing. If seen from the side, it unmistakably could be seen that the four-eyed wolves' mouths had settled on Hajime's body.

However, at that time Hajime's appearance started to sway and the four-eyed wolves' mouths only gachin! , let out such sounds as they bit the empty space. Unbeknownst to them, Hajime's body had advanced one step. Hajime shot through the abdomens of the four-eyed wolves he just passed through.

Furthermore, another four-eyed wolves leaped at Hajime, but it became the same as before, the place they attacked was wrong by a step. In each case, Hajime shot and blown them away as they passed each other.

The black, four-eyed wolves were as if they mistaken their eyes measurement and the chain of event completely became like that. It was the skill derived from Hajime's "Sign Interception" called "＋Phantom Step". The effect was at the time he intercepted his presence and he'd leave his presence in the spot before he intercepted it for a few seconds. Because the real body's presence was intercepted, it'd be mistaken that he was still on his former location. Of course, because he merely shifted his presence, it was comparatively easier to notice if ones carefully observed him. But, in a fight which few comma of seconds could decided between victory and defeat, it was difficult for them to not be puzzled. The validity increased if the enemies were particularly sensitive towards presence.

Naturally, Hajime used "Light Speed" to control the Cross Bits, so no matter even if the black, four-eyed wolves were demonic beasts with Abyss-class power, they naturally weren't enemies for him. In the end, although the four-eyed wolves were probably Shimizu's trump card, they couldn't even grazed Hajime and annihilated in two minutes.

Hajime scattered the Cross Bits which killed the leaders with raging force. From the information the Cross Bits he put beside Shia in separated location, only several left before it ended in the other side. Even the demonic beasts that tried to charge towards the town were completely disallowed to drew near by Yue's thunder dragon.

After about two minutes, Hajime confirmed that they succeeded in eliminating the brainwashed demonic beasts. Then, having confirmed that, suu— he greatly inhaled and roared which coupled with "Magic Power Emission."

"KAaAAAAAAAAAAA!!!"

The huge roar and the surge of magic power ran through the battlefield. The overwhelming pressure attacked and shocked the demonic beasts' minds and they feel huge instinctive fear. Following that, they noticed their groups' leaders were already non-existence. After a moment of stiffening, they began to turn on their heels and desperately escaping towards the north while making a detour around Hajime.

The groups of demonic beasts which like a water current was as if parted by a rock on the river which was Hajime. Hajime confirmed his appearance with a sharp gaze, when he discovered Shimizu who seemed trying to escape using the last four-eyed wolf in the moment of confusion.

Hajime kneeled and firmly set Donner with both hands and successively pulled the trigger. The bullets ran through the air with miraculous time lag, the four-eyed wolf sneak a glance towards the sign of turbulence felt by "Prediction" and avoid the first attack, but it collapsed as the second attack shot through its big thigh. The impact made Shimizu blown away. Because his body's specs were high, he immediately got up even though his body was struck hard. He rushed and shouted something towards the four-eyed wolf then he started to kick its head.

He probably shouted something about it should quickly stand up. He was obviously hysteric. After a while, maybe he was hinted by something to force the wolf to move, he began to chant as he put his hand on the black, four-eyed wolf's head.

Hajime saw that, fired the railgun without the need to discuss, and pierced where the black, four-eyed wolf was stopped. Shimizu who once again blown away because of the after effect was moving his limbs in panic, and this time he escaping by himself as he began to run towards the north just like the demonic beasts.

Hajime took out magic-driven two-wheeler, accelerated at once and caught up to Shimizu in the blink of the time. Shimizu looked back towards the KIiIII! sound behind him and he frantically moved his limbs to escape as he became stupefied by the bike which shouldn't be existed in this different world.

"What! What the hell! That's impossible! If it's true, the same hero as I- GUPEh!?"

The back of the head of Shimizu who frantically running while cursing was struck by Hajime's artificial arm with two-wheeler's momentum as is. Shimizu's face dived into the ground and slipped on the ground for several meters with killer whale-like posture before he stopped.

"Well then, what should I say to sensei? About this guy… and according to the situation, mine will…"

Hajime said that to himself as he tied up Shimizu using the wire from his artificial arm and return towards the town as is. The appearance of Shimizu who was dragged by the two-wheeler as he was painted by the scattered blood and fleshes of demonic beasts while creating a dust storm on the ruined ground… could be correctly said as a defeated soldier.

# Chapter 3 : Undesired Result

For Shimizu Yukitoshi, to be summoned to a different world was the dream he yearned for. Because he knew that was impossible, every day he was dreaming by a reading book in his hand or web novels. In his dream, he saved a lot of worlds, though he didn't know if he went towards the Happy End with the heroines. Inside Shimizu's room, the walls couldn't be seen as they were buried by posters of beautiful girls, and inside the glass rack at one of the walls were his favorite beautiful girl figures with improper poses lined up in such a cramped place. His bookshelf was filled with manga, light novels, thin books, and eroges, while the ones that couldn't be put there were all over the room as they made towers.

That's right, Shimizu Yukitoshi was a genuine otaku. However, there's no one among the classmates who knew that fact. That's because Shimizu himself thoroughly hid it. There was no need to talk about his reasons. He had seen the classmates' attitude towards Hajime, that's why there was no way he could become an open otaku.

Inside class, it could be said he was just a mob character by those who knew him well. There was no one he was especially close to, and he always quietly read a book in his seat. If he was talked to, he would give the minimum answer in a small mutter. To begin with, he kept the quiet attitude because he was bullied in junior high school. Maybe because it was the natural flow, he became a truant and stayed inside his own room every day, and he inevitable tried to create books and games to kill time. Even though his parents always worried about him, he brought otaku goods into his room every day which made his big and little brother annoyed. They even showed that in their attitudes and words, which made Shimizu feel that the comforting house became worse, the so-called losing his place to stay. With such a gloomy environment, Shimizu thought of doing devious things to others inside his mind without letting it out on the surface. Thus he became more and more devoted into delusions and book creation.

Because he was like that, when he understood the summoning to a

different world was the truth, his mind's state was as if shouting, "Here it come-!!". Even at the time Aiko protested fiercely against Ishtar, or when Kouki passionately decided to help humanity win and return to their original world, inside Shimizu's head were only the delusions of the real him doing spectacular things in this different world. He was elated because the delusions he thought as impossible had become truth, and the pattern of being summoned to a different world where the protagonist was being unreasonably demanded was driven away from his mind.

Thus it actually became just as he expected, there was a conflict in this different world life for real. First, Shimizu certainly kept a certain cheat-like spec as a secret, but that was the same thing for the other classmates. Furthermore, Kouki was the "hero," not him and maybe because of that the women only kept coming near Kouki, and it became the saying that "he was just one of the many additional people." With this, nothing changed from the time he was in Japan. Though his wish was fulfilled, the reality that didn't become just like he hoped for made Shimizu increase his deviousness, and his dissatisfaction was increasing in his mind.

Just why am I not the hero? Just why do the women only surround and desire Kouki? Just why is it not I, but Kouki who always gets treated as special? Even though I can do better if I am the hero. Then, the girls will accept me if I approach them… this, this satisfying condition is everyone's fault, I am the only special one, that's the egoistic idea which gnawed on Shimizu's mind.

At that time. The combat practice held in the « Orcus Great Dungeon ». Shimizu thought of it as his chance. I won't mind about anyone else. It was the same even if they are here or not. Those classmates that treated me as background will surely notice my skill, Shimizu tried to use this opportunity… however, there was something he noticed.

He wasn't a special existence at all, there was no opportunity-like development, and he certainly would become a "dead" person in the next moment. As he was about to be killed by the Traum Soldier, he saw the "hero" who fought with a more brutal monster in the distance, and his fantasy about a different world crumbled as it made a rattling sound.

Then he witnessed the classmate who fell to “death” into the abyss, and his heart was broken. He only interpreted things on his own convenience and his mind always kept seeing others inferior than him, so naturally his heart was not strong.

When he returned to the royal palace, Shimizu once again shut himself in his own room. However, the literacies that could cheer him up just like in his room in Japan were not here. That’s why Shimizu naturally spent his time reading books around the skills and magic concerning his class, “Dark Magic-user.”

Dark magic system was a magic system which acted on the others’ minds and senses, it was recognized as magic that basically give bad statuses to the target in battle. Shimizu’s aptitude were such as altering the others’ recognition, showing illusions, interfering with the image of the completed magic to disrupt the invocation, and with further mastering, he could make disorder in one’s body control.

Thus the depression in his heart was completely blown away as he read the books, and Shimizu immediately recalled something. Can I brainwash someone if I master dark magic? , something like that. Shimizu was excited. If his assumption was correct, he could do whatever he wants to anyone. That’s right, whatever he wants. The stagnating darkness spread in Shimizu’s mind. Since that day, he zealously trained with undivided attention.

However, it didn’t easily go his way. First, for something with strong ego like a human, he needed to continuously apply the spell for several hours or else he could not do the brainwashing. Naturally, that was if there was no resistance. As expected, there’s no one who wouldn’t react if he put the spell. It was necessary for him to put the target in a sleep-like state. If the target was a human, it would be too hard for him to hide and control brainwashing, circumstance-wise and time-wise. As he thought of what happened when he was found out, Shimizu couldn’t help but abandoning this because of the high risk.

Shimizu drooped his shoulders, but he immediately recalled about the reason he was summoned, the demon race could control demonic beasts. He wondered if he could brainwash the demonic

beasts who moved by instinct and have small egos compared to humans. To confirm it, Shimizu went outside the Imperial Capital and repeatedly experimented on small fry demonic beasts. As the result, he proved that it was far easier to brainwash them compared to humans. To begin with, he could only do it because Shimizu was one of the cheaters and had an extremely high talent in dark magic. Previously, Ishtar had said that even if the people of this spent much time, they could only control 1-2 things.

Shimizu who had finished the experiments in the Imperial Capital's outskirts thought it'd be good if he could control strong demonic beasts. However, he felt intimidated to go towards the dungeon frontline just like Kouki's party. Then at the time he was at lost of what to do, he heard the talk about Aiko's bodyguards. If he joined them, he'd be able to encountered a good demonic beast or so he thought.

In the end, Aiko's party came to Ul town, then he heard about the demonic beasts in the mountain ranges area in the north and he was lost in greed when he thought to make them his subordinates. In their next meeting, everyone would be in awe and respect towards his great achievement, and he'd be treated as special or so his delusion went.

Normally, for the short amount of time of around two weeks, no matter if Shimizu was a genius in dark magic, and he used the efficient method by only brainwashing the leader of the groups, 1,000 was the limit. Moreover, it would only be those in Brutal's level in the second mountain range.

However, he was helped by a certain existence, and he was able to control Tio, who gave her power to Shimizu to efficiently brainwash even the demonic beasts in the fourth mountain range by chance. And at the same time, that certain existence promised him to reinforce him with troops of demonic beasts every day, and Shimizu's bound of reasoning completely came off. Finally, as he was soaked in joy that he was indeed special, the large crowd in his full control was turned towards the town.

Thus as the result…

He was turned into such misery for those who saw him, and he was made to kneel in front of Aiko and the others. By the way, the reason why he looked like a defeated soldier was because Hajime dragged him using magic-driven two-wheeler on the ground which covered with demonic beasts' flesh and blood coupled with the fluttering cloud of dust. Shimizu was unconscious with the white of his eyes displayed, and when they saw he was brought to the town with his head repeatedly hitting the ground, Aiko and the others' expressions were cramped.

By the way, their current location was in the outskirts and in this location were only Aiko, the students, several people from the bodyguard Knights and town leaders, Will, and Hajime's party. As expected, if the mastermind behind the attack was brought to the town, the commotions would become bigger and it'd be difficult to hold a conversation or so their reason. The town leaders which remained inside the town were currently busy with post treatment.

Aiko had stepped up towards Shimizu who was collapsed with the white of his eyes shown. His appearance which wearing a black robe, following by the fact he was dragged back directly from the battlefield became unassailable proofs that he was the culprit behind the attack. It was a fact she didn't want to believe as Aiko's expression warped in sadness, and she shook Shimizu to woke him up.

David and the others told her to stop it because it was dangerous, but she shook her head to refuse them. The same thing happened with the restraint. It was released because she wouldn't be able to hold a good talk with Shimizu with that on. In the end, Aiko was only wanted to talk as a teacher and a student.

Before long, Shimizu's consciousness begin to return from Aiko's call. He looked at the surrounding with a blank look, and maybe because he understood his situation, Hah, he raised his upper body. He immediately tried to distance himself, but maybe because the damage on the back of his head, he staggered and fell on his butt, then backed away as is. With caution and abjection, he had a mixed expression with irritation excluded, and he looked around.

"Shimizu-kun, please calm down. There is no one here that will

harm you… sensei only want to talk with Shimizu-kun. Just why did you do that… I don't mind if we talk about something else. Will you, let sensei hear Shimizu-kun's feelings?"

Because Aiko matched her gaze to Shimizu, he stopped looking around. Following that, he averted his eyes and looked down then spoke with voice that couldn't be heard easily… rather he started cursing.

"Why? You still don't understand that. That's why this guys and that guys are so incompetent. Treating me like an idiot… the hero, that hero is annoying. Even though I could do better if it's me… unnoticed, and treated like a mob character… honestly, there are only idiots… that's why I thought of showing my worth…"

"You… know your place! You almost destroy the town!"

"That's right! If you are talking about idiot, it is you!"

"Think how much you made Ai-chan-sensei worried!"

Far from reflecting, Shimizu was cursing out his dissatisfaction to the surrounding, so Tamai, Sonobe, and the other students were angry and said their objection one after another. Maybe because he was pressured by their momentum, Shimizu looked more and more down and assumed silence.

Because Aiko couldn't stand Shimizu looked like that, she tried to held down the further heating up students, and questioned Shimizu with a voice which carried as much warm as possible.

"I see, you have a lot of dissatisfaction… however, Shimizu-kun. If it's about triumphing over everyone, that made sensei don't understand it even more. Why, did you tried to attack the town? If you attacked the town as is… a lot of people will be dead… aside on how you subdued a lot of demonic beasts, that cannot show your "worth.""

Aiko's justifiable question made Shimizu slightly looked up and his dreary, dark eyes turned towards Aiko from the gaps of his dirtied forelock which hanged down, then he floated a faint smile.

“… I can show it… if it’s to the Demon race.”
“Wh-!?”

Those unexpected words which came out from Shimizu’s mouth made not only Aiko, excluding Hajime and his party, everyone in that place were shocked. Shimizu raised a satisfied expression when he saw their appearances, and though it was the same as before, he began to talk with a voice that stronger than the previous pressure which made him shut up.

“To capture the demonic beast, I went to the mountain range area in the north alone. At that time, I met a person from demon race. At the beginning, of course I was cautious… but that Demon race wanted to talk to me. Then, we came to an understanding. That guy know my true worth. That’s why I came to that guy… demon race’s side and made a contract.”

“A contract… you say? What do you mean?”

Aiko was shaken by the fact he was connected to the Demon race, their enemy in war, but she was sure that the Demon race must have coaxed her student and she asked that while restraining her anger.

Looking at Aiko, Shimizu was grinning as if he saw something amusing, then he said the impactful words.

“… Hatanaka-sensei… it is to kill you.”
“… Eh?”

For a moment, Aiko didn’t understand what he had said as she spontaneously let out that silly voice. The same thing happened to everyone there, they became stupefied for a moment, they understood the meaning earlier than Aiko, and stared at Shimizu with fury in their eyes.

Shimizu ducked for a moment from the piercing glares which filled with strong anger from the students and the guard Knights, but he stopped mid-way and continued his words as if to shake off their glares.

“What’s with that expression. Did you think I was used by the demon race? In certain ways, you’re a more troublesome existence than the hero… “Goddess of Good Harvest”… if I make it looked like you killed the townspeople, I will be welcomed to demon race’s side as a “hero.” It’s that kind of contract. My ability is amazing after all. They said it’d be too wasteful for me to be under that hero. As expected, the one who understands it will understand. Actually, they also lent me strong demonic beasts, and I was able to create an army that exceeded my imagination… that’s why, that’s why I thought can absolutely kill you! What’s with that! What the heck was that! Why an army of 60,000 was defeated! Why those weapons existed in this different world! You, just what on earth are you!”

Because of the ridicule at the beginning, Aiko could only stare blankly at Shimizu, her student when he said the word “kill,” and maybe because he was agitated as he spoke, he began to shout when he looked at Hajime. Inside his eyes were something more than melancholy and abjection, the irritation because nothing went according to his desire, the hatred towards Hajime who obstructed him, following that, the envy towards that power were mixed, mixed and created his madness.

Apparently, Shimizu didn’t notice the gray-haired, eye-patched boy before him was Nagumo Hajime, his classmate. To begin with, it could be said it couldn’t be helped because he never talk to him…

Shimizu kept glaring and cursing at Hajime as if he would attack him at any moment, and Hajime who suddenly became the target could hear Shimizu cursing as “Even though you’re just a chuuni character,” and actually he got a considerably deep damage as he looked at the distance to escape the reality. His attitude could be seen as, “I don’t think anything of you,” so it caused Shimizu to agitated further.

Having guessed Hajime’s feeling, his back was patted by Yue and her kindness made him want to cry again.

Maybe thanks to Hajime ignoring the serious mood and entering his own world(?), Aiko was given the time to regain her sense from the impact, she took one deep breath and even without any courage to

confront his rage, she didn't move from her spot then grasped Shimizu's hand, and talked quietly.

"Shimizu-kun. Please calm down."
"Wh-What's with you! Let go!"

He was surprised by the sudden touch and Shimizu immediately tried to shake her off, but Aiko said she wouldn't let go and further increased the power of her grip. Maybe because Shimizu couldn't look back at Aiko's serious gaze, he gradually calmed down as he looked down again, and his expression was hidden by his forelock.

"Shimizu-kun… I have understood your feelings. You want to be "special." Your feelings aren't mistaken. It was a natural wish for a human. Following that, you surely can become "special." After all, although your method was mistaken, it is the truth that you can do that much… however, don't go to the demon race's side. Having heard your story, that demon race was just trying to use your desire. Sensei, can't entrust her important student to that kind of person at all… Shimizu-kun. Let's do it over, okay? I don't want anyone to fight, but if Shimizu-kun wish for it, sensei will support you. If it is you, you definitely can fight as equal with Amanogawa-kun and the others. Then, some day, let's return together when we found the method to return to Japan, okay?"

Shimizu heard Aiko speaking in silence, and before one knew it his shoulders trembled. Even the students and the guard Knights thought Shimizu was shaken by Aiko's words and began to cry. Actually, Sonobe Yuka, who famous to be easily moved to tears in the class, was already crying when she saw Aiko and Shimizu.

However, it wasn't something sweet as it wouldn't simply went her way. Aiko patted the trembling Shimizu's head with gentle expression, but Shimizu suddenly gripped the outstretched hand in return and pulled her, then he turned her over and coiled his arm around Aiko's neck. Aiko unintentionally groaned because her arm was bound behind her and he took out a 10 cm long needle from god-knows where, then he pointed it at back of her neck.

"Don't move! Or I will pierce it!"

Shimizu shouted hysterically. His expression was twitching in convulsion, in his eyes had the same madness when he was cursing Hajime. His previously trembling shoulders was apparently from laughter.

Aiko looked in pain because she was unable pull apart Shimizu's arm which coiled on her throat. The surrounding people desperately stopped their movement after they received Shimizu's warning. From Shimizu's appearance, they understood he would seriously do that for real. Everyone worriedly called Aiko's name with regretting tone, and Shimizu continued to ridicule them.

Incidentally, Hajime finally returned to reality at this time. Because he was on the trip to escape the reality up until now, his face said, "Oya? Since when…," because of the sudden development.

"Listen, this is a poisonous needle I got from a demonic beast in the northern mountain range! She'll only suffer for a few minute before she die if I pierce it! If you understand, then everyone must throw away their weapons and raise your hands!"

With the words from the maddened Shimizu, the surrounding people turned pale. Shimizu was grinning at the students and guard Knights who completely couldn't move, and he turned his glance towards Hajime.

"Oi, you, chuuni bastard, you! Not on your back! I am talking about you! Don't take me for a fool, you bastard! If you keep joking around, I'll really kill her! If you understand, give me your gun! The other arms too!"

Because the way Shimizu called him was too cruel, he inadvertently looked back appealing, "It's not me," which ended as futile, and Hajime face looked so unpleased. In spite of the tense situation, his attitude didn't change as he was calm, and Shimizu lost his temper because he thought he was taken for a fool again. Thus hysterically, he demanded Hajime to hand over his firearms.

Hajime returned to look at Shimizu with extremely cold eyes when he heard that.

“Well, you, to say you won’t kill her… to begin with, you can’t go to the demon race’s side if you don’t kill sensei, so you’re going to kill her anyway, right? That’s why I won’t hand them over.”

“Shut up, shut up, shut up! Just be quiet and hand them over! An idiot like you should just do what I said! Th-That’s right, hehe, oi, give me your slave too. Let her carry the firearms!”

With his calm returning, Shimizu shouted some more. Because he was too cornered, he couldn’t do a normal judgement anymore. Shia, who marked down by Shimizu, was trembling and her expression displayed her disgust.

“Even if I fired three times in succession to shut you up, you’ll only become more creepy… rather, Shia, even if you’re disgusted don’t hide behind me. He isn’t that dreadful.”

“But, he is really disgusting… it can be said my mind can’t accept it… just look, those pimples. It’s impossible to not feel disgust.”

“Well, though he wish to be a hero, his lines were the same as the thief that was killed easily by the protagonist in the very beginning after all.”

Though the person in question couldn’t hear because they lowered their volumes, everyone could hear them because as her disgusted eyes and their volumes were becoming louder. Shimizu could only flapped his mouth and his complexion gradually dyed in red, then it changed to blue, and in the end it turned white. It was an example of the change in complexion because of the anger which became too high.

Shimizu began to mutter, “I am a hero, I am special, this guys and that guys are just idiots, everything are those guys’ fault, there’s no problem, everything will go as I wished, I am a hero after all, I am special,” with hollow eyes, following that, he suddenly let out a high-pitched laugh as if he was shaken free of something.

“… Shi-Shimizu-kun… let us talk… after all… everything is okay…”

Even though Aiko was in pain as she was exposed to Shimizu’s

crazed antique, she let out those words, and at the moment he heard that, Shimizu completely stopped his laugh and strangled Aiko further.

"… How annoying. Stop trying to be a good person, you hypocrite. Just shut up and become a tool for me to escape from here."

Shimizu muttered that with a dark tone and he looked at Hajime again. Without any agitation or other expressions, he looked at Hajime with eyes filled with negative feelings, next he saw the gun in the holster on his thigh. What he wanted was transmitted without the need for words. If he falter here, he could just disregard his life and death and, no, his good future would be only a dream if he didn't harm Aiko.

Hajime leaked a sigh, he thought to fire the wire when he passed the gun and used "Lightning-clad" even if Aiko got involved, but he slowly reached Donner-Schlag so as to not stimulated Shimizu. Because Aiko body was small, she couldn't become a shield, and it was possible for Hajime to hit Shimizu before he realize with his drawing speed, he thought it'd be okay to be looked by Aiko with slightly hurt eyes.

But, at the moment Hajime started to drop his hand, the situation suddenly changed.

"Kh!? Don't! Avoid it!"

As she shouted that, Shia strengthened her body to the best of her ability and momentarily achieved a high-speed movement on Ground Shrinker level, and she jumped towards Aiko.

Because of the abruptness, Shimizu immediately tried to pierce the needle into Aiko. Shia was doing the impossible by pulling Aiko and twisted her body to protect her from something, then a blue colored water current penetrated through Shimizu's chest and that laser-like thing passed over the place in which Aiko's head where a while ago almost simultaneously.

Hajime, who was inside the trajectory, used Donner to defend against the laser of water that probably the offensive magic called

“Break” from water system. Then about Shia, she vigorously charged as she embraced Aiko closely, as is, she slipped and dived into the ground with her shoulder. She raised a dust storm, and Shia who finally stopped, “Uguh,” raised a pained groan and remained lying.

“Shia!”

Among everyone who was stiffened by the sudden development, Yue ran with all of her might as she called Shia’s name. Following that, she took a position to protect Shia and the woman she embraced, Aiko from another attack.

Hajime didn’t say anything and only thanked and praised Yue in his mind because she moved just as he hoped for, then he held Donner with both hand while he used “Farsight” to trace the trajectory of that “Break.” Immediately, he saw a black clothed man with pointed ears and swept-back hair who rode on a huge bird-like demonic beast in the distance.

DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh! DOPANh!

In a flash, Hajime successively fired the railgun towards the flying demonic beast and the silhouette. The man with swept-back hair, as if he had anticipated the attack, made the bird-like demonic beast desperately evade by doing barrel roll as he confirmed Hajime’s location. It was quite an agile demonic beasts, but it couldn’t evaded everything and one of the bird-like demonic beast’s leg was blown off, the swept-back man’s shoulder was also blown off. Even so, rather than falling, its speed didn’t slowed and it aimed to escape at full speed. It could only said the way it escape from the series of attacks as nothing but splendid.

Hajime guessed that the man probably the person from Demon race from Shimizu’s talk. The man already detoured to the town in low altitude as if he was making the town as a shield, then vanished. From the method he used to escape from Hajime’s bullets, it seemed the information about Hajime and his party were already known by the Demon race which made Hajime raised a bitter expression. Because he escaped towards Uldeia lake, it’d be too difficult to pursuit him using unmanned reconnaissance plane if he escaped

through the forest. Above all, that's not his current priority.

"Hajime!"

Maybe because Yue had also guessed the enemy escaped, she called Hajime with a voice which contained impatience unlike the usual.

Hajime put Donner back into the holster, and ran up to Shia without even looking at the collapsed Shimizu. Shia was faced-up as she was rested on Yue's laps and her expression warped in pain. Aiko beside her also showed similar expression as she was embraced by Yue.

"Ha-Hajime-san… ukh… I… am… okay… p-please, sensei-san was… grazed by the poisonous needle…"

There was a hole with three centimeters in diameter in Shia's flank. Even though the bleeding was suppressed by body strengthening, it could be understood that she was in considerable pain from the amount of sweat flowed in her face. However, she floated a forced smile and told to give priority to Aiko with a shaking voice.

When he saw Aiko, her complexion was completely paled, and her limbs began to convulse. Maybe because she heard Shia and Hajime's conversation, Aiko desperately shook her neck, appealing to let Shia treated first. She couldn't let out any word because the poison had already spreaded. If Shimizu's words were correct, she only had several minutes, no, it'd be less than a minute looking from Aiko's appearance. She didn't want to make more trouble as it was already too late.

Hajime averted his gaze away from Aiko and unhesitatingly nodded at Shia, then he let out a vial from "Treasure Box." At that time, the surrounding people finally ran up towards Hajime and the others with uneasy expressions as they let out cries from their mouths. The students, David, and the Knights were particularly shaken, they were half in panic. They were asking Hajime about her safety, stepped back when they saw her appearance, and tried to cast recovery magic which was ineffective… towards such people, Hajime's one word, "Silence," with killing pressure made them stepped back and keep silent.

Even Hajime was slightly surprised by what he had said. His anger because Shia's injury was more than he expected. Apparently, without him noticing it, he had recognized her as an important companion deep in his heart. Therefore, he was unbearably angry towards the Demon race that came in contact with Shimizu and himself who had forgotten the possibility of him still nearby.

If he do something to Aiko and the others when Hajime's party went to the frontline, the possibility it become a chaos was high. However, because he actually didn't do anything, he was convinced that he didn't want to do it directly, without any basis to it.

As a matter of fact, that demon race person have thought to assassinate Aiko when Shimizu was on rampage, but he lost the chance because he was stupefied by Hajime's party which was out of the normal. Afterwards, as he was looking for a chance, the talk between Shimizu and Aiko started. Thus he thought to leave killing Aiko to Shimizu as he looked from the distance, but he guessed that Aiko would be recaptured in the last moment by the unstandard Hajime, so he cast a magic which specialized in penetration to pierce Shimizu and Aiko.

However, even though the Demon race was quick to see that opportunity, there was one miscalculation. That was, if thing went well the trajectory would make it hit Hajime and the others, erasing those risk factors at the same time, but Shia's peculiar magic was activated. That was "Foresight." Shia who was behind Hajime naturally would be hit by the trajectory along with Shimizu, Aiko, and Hajime, so she dashed out to "break" the future she saw.

Thanks to that, the future where the attack went through Aiko's head and she immediately died was avoided. Shia had put her body in the line to change that future. Even though he was doubtful on why she put her life for Aiko who wasn't not intimate with her, Hajime would not treat an important companion who had worked her best coldly. Therefore, he unhesitatingly used the scarce "Holy Water" for Aiko. Because there was no time, it was the most certain thing to use.

Hajime held Aiko who was supported by Yue, put the vial in her mouth and poured the holy water little by little. Aiko looked at

Hajime who didn't take Shia as the top priority with criticizing glare, but ignored by Hajime. Currently, he prioritized Shia's will than Aiko's or his own intention. That's why he just poured the holy water as discussion wasn't necessary. However, Aikos' whole body began to convulse and couldn't be moved as she desired, so she couldn't swallow the water. Rather, it was possible to enter the lungs and made her vomit.

Hajime judged it was impossible for Aiko to swallow the holy water by herself, he put the remaining holy water inside his mouth, and he unhesitatingly poured it directly into Aiko's mouth.

"Kh!?"

Aiko opened her eyes wide. Next, screams and angry voices raised by everyone in Hajime's surrounding. However, Hajime ignored all of those and he twined his tongue that invaded Aiko's mouth, then he forcefully poured the holy water. Hajime's expression didn't contain any shame or guilt, there was only seriousness about doing what had to be done.

Before long, Aiko's throat moved as to swallow and the holy water flowed inside her body. Following that, the pain which attacking her body and the cold feeling as her life was going to be washed away were blown away as if a fire was lighted in her core and started to spread around. Aiko remembered the feeling of being soaked inside the hot spring in the cold winter, and her body shook. It was just as expected of the holy water. It was a miraculous water that prevent his body broken from eating the flesh and blood of demonic beasts. The effect was preeminent.

Not long after, the mouth to mouth ended just in the blink of time, and Hajime separated his mouth from Aiko's. Silver colored string appeared between the two. Hajime observed Aiko. His purpose was to ascertain that she had escaped from the crisis. On the other side, Aiko was still looking at Hajime blankly as her eyes were unfocused.

"Sensei."
"…"

“Sensei?”
“…”

“Oi! Sensei!”
“Fue!?”

Hajime called Aiko to ask her condition, but Aiko keep blankly looked at him and unmoving. Hajime was irritated, so he lightly slapped her cheek and raised his volume, then she raised an indescribably lovely voice and regained her senses.

“How’s your body? Are there any sense of incompatibility?”

“Heh? A, um, that’s, I am o-o-o-okay. There is no abnormality, rather I feel good… wait, th-that’s wrong! By no mean that, th-that thing feel good, what I mean was the medicine’s effect-”

“I see. Then, that’s good.”

Hajime looked as if he’d lose his temper, and answered simply towards Aiko who said there was no abnormality in her physical condition, then he simply removed the hand which supported Aiko and moved towards Shia.

Although she was stupefied by Hajime’s attitude, Aiko didn’t stay in that spot and she had run towards Shia before she aware of it.

Hajime took out another holy water and poured half of it directly into Shia’s wound, and the other half was brought close to Shia’s mouth to let her drink it. The injured parts make a small shuu-sound and recovered rapidly, but somehow Shia didn’t want to drink the holy water and shook her head.

“Ha-Hajime-san…”

“Shia, wha-…”

“Me too… it’ll be better… guh… to do it mouth to mouth…”

“Y-you are always like this…”

As she was drenched in sweat because of the pain, Shia leaked out

her desire. Even if I am rolled around, I won't get up until you do that! , she said those kind of demand, and even Hajime was amazed by this. As expected, there's no need to purposely do mouth to mouth because it was unnecessary, so he ignored the silent complaint from Yue who was nice to Shia recently and thrust the vial into Shia's mouth.

"Muguh!? … gulp gulp … puhah… Uu~, Hajime-san is unfair… I am jealous of sensei-san…"

"Hajime… bad."

"Fue!? Sh-Shia-san, you're wrong! That's a lifesaving action! It is different from what Shia-san want! I am a teacher after all!"

She received sulky gaze and words from Shia and scolding from Yue to read the mood, but Aiko whose face redden purposely made excuses, and Hajime could only let out, "Haa~", a profound sigh which contained both relief and amazement.

Following that, the outfielders who had guessed thing had settled began to make noise again because, everyone probably recalled the pitiful existence which had been forgotten. It was particularly important for Aiko. So Aiko probably didn't forget him and just didn't understand what had happened all of a sudden.

Hajime called out to a guard Knight who was nearest to Shimizu.

"… You, is Shimizu still alive?"

With those words, everyone went "Ah," with expressions as if they just remembered about him and they looked at the collapsed Shimizu. Only Aiko displayed a perplexed look and said, "Eh? Eh?," as she looked around, she might've recalled the situation when Shia snatched her. With mixed complexion, she panicky run towards Shimizu.

"Shimizu-kun! Aa, this is… so cruel."

In Shimizu's chest was a hole similar to Shia's. The bleeding was intense, and there was a big pool of blood… he probably only had a few minutes left.

“I-I don’t want to die… h-help… if it’s like this… no… I can’t believe it…”

Shimizu spoke to Aiko who held his hand by his side, it was just monologue of words which couldn’t be understood in a muttering whisper. Aiko looked at the surrounding for help, but all of them averted their eyes. It was already hopeless. Moreover, the expressions of not wanting to help vividly appeared on them.

Aiko clinged to the last straw as she looked back and shouted to the Hajime who was there.

“Nagumo-kun! That medicine from before! If it is now-! Please!”

Hajime had expected Aiko’s words and muttered, “It really came to this…,” along with a sigh, then he moved towards Aiko and Shimizu. Following that, he questioned Aiko even though he know what the answer would be.

“Do you want to help him, sensei? He was going to kill you, you know? I think it had crossed the limit no matter how much a “teacher” you are.”

He was someone who tried to kill her, but she protected him just because he was her student, just how many people could became a “teacher” like her in such desperation. She might already be at an abnormal level for a “teacher.” Aiko accurately read the meaning behind his question, her eyes shaken for a moment, then she answered in a firm expression.

“Certainly, it might be as you had said. No, it is surely as you had said. However, I just want to be that (…) kind of teacher. I will be the students’ ally no matter what happen, I have vowed to become that kind of teacher. Therefore, Nagumo-kun-…”

Hajime became ill-humored as he scratched his head because the answer just as he expected, and he sighed in reluctance because that’s just how Aiko-sensei was. Following that, he looked at the sky as he thought of something for a while, he took one deep breath and went towards Shimizu’s side with a resolute expression.

“Shimizu. Can you hear me? I have something that can save you.”

“!”

“However, there’s something I want to ask first.”
“…”

Hearing the words he could be saved, Shimizu responded by stopping his mutters and his wandering eyes were staring at Hajime. In a beat, Hajime asked a simple question.

“… Are you… an enemy?”

Shimizu immediately shook his head without any hesitation. Following that, he floated a smile of abjection and began to plead for his life.

“I-I am not your enemy… I-I won’t do… anything… I will do whatever you want… so help me, I-I’ll even give you an army… and even… brainwash the women… I-I swear… I swear to be loyal… I’ll do anything… so help me…”

With those words, Hajime became expressionless. Following that, he could be seen looking into Shimizu’s eyes quietly as if trying to confirm his real intention. Shimizu who thought he was seeing the depth of his heart immediately looked away. However, Hajime was able to confirm it. There’s darkness and impurity more than before inside Shimizu’s eyes. They were saturated by hatred, anger, envy, desire, and other negative feelings, they were just like the deep sea where the light did not reach.

Hajime was convinced. Aiko’s words didn’t even reach Shimizu’s mind. Therefore Shimizu would surely become their enemy. He had determined that. For a moment, his gaze matched Aiko’s. Aiko was also looking at Hajime and their gaze met. Following that, Aiko was immediately able to guess what Hajime was going to do. Her expression changed and she jumped out to stop Hajime.

“DON’T!”

However, Hajime was much faster.

DOPANh! DOPANh!

“Kh!?”

The sound where a breath was taken away. It wasn’t known who let that out. One in the head and one in the heart. The bullets which accurately shot made Shimizu’s body jumped for a moment, and they awarded him with death.

Inside the lingering gunshot, no one let out a word, and they could only watch Hajime silently looking at the corpse with a gun in one hand that raised white smoke, in blank surprise. Silence ruled their vicinity, within those who could not move, a mutter was leaked.

“… Why?”

It was Aiko. In a blank surprise, she watched the remains of Shimizu who had began his travel to the death, and she raised that question. Hajime looked away from Shimizu and he looked at Aiko. At the same time, Aiko matched Hajime’s gaze again. Inside her eyes, anger, sadness, distrust and others feelings were raised and disappeared, then they raised and disappeared once again.

“He is an enemy after all.”

Hajime’s answer towards Aiko’s question was truly simple.

“That! Shimizu-kun is-…”

“Reforming? Sorry to burst your bubble, I am not so good natured to believe that, above all my eyes aren’t clouded at all.”

When he asked the last question, Shimizu’s eyes was telling him that he had “fall.” Before death, his mind still moved towards killing Aiko, Hajime thought Shimizu could slightly change his way of life because just like the time when Hajime almost fell, there’s Yue’s existence that was capable of holding and retaining him, so… he questioned Shimizu with that thought in mind. If that was so, he had consider to give Shimizu a chance by putting into him a collar and letting Aiko take custody of him. However, even before death, Shimizu’s eyes didn’t even show such sign.

Aiko should also feel that. However, Aiko was the “teacher,” by no means could she abandon him. She just couldn’t do that.

“Therefore, rather than killing him-! If he is kept inside the royal palace, and returned together with us to Japan, possibly… there’s the possibility-!”

“… Even if I tried to give you a reason, I know sensei won’t agree to it at all. I have killed sensei’s important student. It’s okay for sensei to decide whatever you want to do about me.”

“… Such a thing is-”

“‘A lonely way of life.’ I’ve thought of various things because of sensei’s words. However, in this world where a person’s life is cruelly light, I thought of not showing any mercy towards my enemy… and I won’t change that. I don’t think I want to change that. I have no time for that.”

“Nagumo-kun…”

“I’ll do the same thing from now on. At the times I think it is necessary… I’ll pull the trigger no matter how many times it’ll be. If you thought I was mistaken… sensei only has to do what you want… however, I want you to remember one thing. Even if it’s sensei or the other classmates… I’ll pull the trigger if you become my enemy…”

Aiko looked down as she bit her lip. It was no one but Aiko who said, “Having heard my talk, I won’t refute whatever your decision is.” No more word coming out. Hajime looked at such Aiko and he turned his feet because the things needed to be done here had finished. Yue and Shia quietly nestled close to him. Accompanied with Pressure, Hajime looked at Will, Aiko, and the other’s appearances, and because there’s also the matter of post treatment, they silently followed Hajime in painful reluctance.

The town leaders and Knights’ had a purpose to detain Hajime and his artifacts, but because of the overflowing “Pressure” and remembering the previous monster-like fight, they withdrew their hands and swords.

“Nagumo-kun!… Sensei is… sensei is…”

Even if her words weren’t continued, he called out Hajime’s name because of her pride as a “teacher.” Hajime stopped for a while and spoke to Aiko over his shoulder.

“… Sensei’s ideal is already a fantasy. However, we are glad that sensei remains as our teacher even if the world had changed… if possible, please don’t give up.”

Following that, this time he didn’t stop and came off from the surrounding circle, he took out magic-driven four-wheeler and escaped from there when everyone had boarded it.

Afterwards, what remained was the clamor from the town that was joyed for their survival and the the indescribably subtle mood.

# Chapter 4 : Inside the Returning Vehicle

The magic-driven four-wheeler dashed onto the highway while raising a storm of dust, with the Northern Mountain Ranges at its back. Because it was a road treaded by many people over the span of many years, it was in far better condition compared to the road from UI town to the Northern Mountain Ranges area. Thanks to the suspensions he installed, the vibrations were dulled and the four-wheeler advanced smoothly towards Fhuren.

Shia was seated in the front seat and her rabbit ears were flapping in the wind thanks to the fully opened windows. She looked somewhat displeased since she liked the two-wheeler more than the four-wheeler. After all, she liked the feeling of her rabbit ears cutting through the wind and embracing Hajime while resting her face on his shoulder.

Naturally, Hajime was the driver. The seat beside him was, of course, Yue's. Will was seated in the back seat.

Will anxiously asked Hajime, while slightly leaning his body forward, "Excuse me~, was it really okay to leave them like that? If you only spoke a little more about it… especially towards Aiko-dono…"

Without turning his head, Hajime answered indifferently, "Nn~? Not really, everything is okay. After all, there would be only more trouble if I stay there… Sensei can also make good decisions even if I am not there."

"… It's probably as you said, but…"

"You… setting aside whether or not you're a good person… aren't you too concerned about others?"

Even though he heard Hajime's words, Will still wore an anxious expression, which made Hajime smile wryly. To truly be in pain and crying for the dead adventurers, not to mention remaining in

an unrelated town about to be attacked by a large crowd of demonic beasts which was normally thought of as suicidal. To forgive Tio, who was the object his grudge, and now he was worried about the relationship between the one who half-threatened him; Hajime and Aiko and the others. He was a noble from the Kingdom, and he was extremely eccentric, as he was aiming to become an adventurer. However, even more than that, he was a good-natured person who cares about everything.

"… A good person."
"A good person~."
"Umu, a good fellow."

Will showed a complex expression towards those words said simultaneously. Although he was praised, it was an indescribably subtle evaluation for women to think of a man as "a good person."

"P-Please stop talking about me… I only wanted to ask you for a full explanation of your reasoning…"

"… Reasoning?"

With no more than a subtle expression while he scratched his cheeks, Will continued to talk. However, Hajime's eyebrows twitched in reaction to Will's words.

"That's right. About Aiko-dono, who was probably left with ill-feelings and about why the boy called Shimizu was killed… The reason for your actions."

"…Didn't I explain it already? He was an enemy…"

"That's the reason you "killed" him and not the reason why you "can't save" him, right? After all, he had already received a mortal wound at that time, and he would be dead in a few minutes if you just left him… There should be a reason as to why you purposely killed him, right?"

"… You unexpectedly observed the situation rather well."

What Will pointed out hit the bullseye. He was a classmate, so the impact when Hajime killed him while Aiko pleaded for help was too

strong. Thus, the fact that it wasn't necessary for Hajime to kill him was well hidden. Will, who noticed that fact, could be said to carry the "eyes" of a noble. Hajime's tone carried admiration towards Will who wasn't deceived.

Even Shia, who had her face out the window to enjoy the wind said, "Now that you mentioned it, I also noticed that," and she turned to look at Hajime, who was driving, with a knowing look. Hajime hesitated a little on how to answer the question, but Yue answered them before he could say anything.

"… Hajime is a tsundere."
"…"
""""Tsundere?""""

Maybe because Yue hit the nail on the head, Hajime kept a poker face and continued his silence. The other members could only parrot her.

"… Repaying Aiko? In other words, you were just worried about her?"
"… That's just a coincidence."

From how Hajime curtly answered and looked the other way, it seemed like Yue's guess was right on the mark, so Shia and the others asked for an explanation.

Because Hajime didn't want to answer them, Yue answered in his stead. In short, he tried to avert Aiko's mind from feeling responsible for Shimizu's death.

Shimizu had said it before. The purpose of meeting the demonic race was to kill "Goddess of Good Harvest," Aiko. In other words, Shimizu was used to kill Aiko. Even the last attack went through Shimizu's body to kill Aiko.

Of course, Aiko wasn't responsible for Shimizu's death. Shimizu sold his soul to the demon race on his own will, which resulted in his death. Because it was the result of his own decision, Shimizu himself was responsible for it. Even if he wasn't responsible for it, it was the responsibility of the one from demon race who mortally

wounded Shimizu.

However, would Aiko agree to it? After all, the last attack was aimed at Aiko. That was the reason why she felt strongly responsible. Aiko always thought of her students first. Shimizu died because she involved him. In effect, wasn't it her fault Shimizu was dead? , she might think in such a way. Thus he thought, can Aiko's mind endure it? ; Hajime felt a slight fear.

Even Aiko should feel unease and fear as human who was summoned to a different world. Although she didn't lament as she cowered and trembled in fear, the reason she could work so hard was because she had her pride as a "teacher." In addition, there were "students" who occupied Aiko's mind as a "teacher."

And a student had died because of her. The impact was greater than when she had heard Hajime had died, or the time when Hajime said the cause was the backstabbing of a classmate. It would be a much stronger blade to damage Aiko's heart. It might even break her.

Hajime calculations would be affected if Aiko was broken, but he was definitely worried about her. Hajime had felt that Aiko's words were an impossible ideal, because they gave birth to a lot of contradictions.

Even so, the words said by Aiko made him think it was definitely be necessary for Yue and Shia's future happiness. That's why even if the world had changed, and even if Hajime had changed, the "preaching" of Hajime's "teacher" made him feel indebted to her.

Therefore Hajime killed Shimizu even though he would die soon enough even if he was left alone. Making a strong impression, emphasizing that Shimizu was an "enemy". This was followed by making an impression of Hajime being the one who killed Shimizu. Aiko's heart shouldn't break down. He thought it was his duty so his "teacher" wouldn't change.

"So that's what happened… Fufu, what a tsundere Hajime-san is."
"So that's what happened…"
"Indeed~, Master is unexpectedly cute."

Yue finished her explanation to the other members, and their eyes carried warmth as they looked at Hajime, but Hajime kept looking the other way.

"… But, I think Aiko noticed it."
"…"

Hajime silently turned his gaze to Yue. Yue returned Hajime's glance with gentle eyes.

"… Aiko is Hajime's teacher. A person whose words remained in Hajime's heart. That's why there's no way she didn't notice…"

"… Yue."

"… It's okay, Aiko is strong. The situation will definitely end how Hajime desired it."

"…"

Apparently Yue trusted Aiko because Aiko could at least have Hajime focus on himself. Something she couldn't do. Towards Yue who watched him with an upward gaze, Hajime responded by gently narrowing his eyes. Because of Yue's words, his worries about Aiko and future developments which clouded his mind cleared.

"Haa~, to create the world where only the two of you existed… no matter how much time passes, I will also create such atmosphere…"

"Th-This, what can I say… I somehow feel something sweet in my mouth…"

"Muu~ this one wants thee to abuse this one, but… even this kind of situation isn't bad…"

Will and the others felt uncomfortable because of Hajime and Yue's sweet atmosphere. Shia in particular was puffing her cheeks and pouting in distaste.

Yue noticed Shia and shifted her gaze towards her, and once again matched Hajime's gaze to silently appeal to him. The content was

none other than “Shia’s reward.” Without Shia’s peculiar magic; “Foresight” and her desperate action, Aiko would have become someone who couldn’t return because of a hole in her head. Shia had saved Hajime’s teacher.

Because he understood, Hajime let out an “Uh,” moved his gaze away from Yue, looked at Shia and said, “… Shia. That’s, well, you saved us. Though it’s belated,… thank you.”

“… Who?”

The result of him saying his gratitude while enduring his embarrassment were those words along with astonished expression. Though veins popped on Hajime’s forehead, he endured it because it was the consequence of his deeds.

“… Well, I think it couldn’t be helped for you to take such attitude… Even so, I am seriously expressing my gratitude, you know?”

Hajime matched his gaze with Shia, who was looking at him firmly expressing his gratitude with a “Thank you.” Because of Hajime straightforward words, Shia’s body trembled as though an electric shock ran through her whole body, and she became restless. Her gaze excitedly wandered around while her cheeks were dyed in deep red. Her rabbit ears were swaying here and there.

“Th-that’s, well, i-it’s not like I’ve done something amazing, and it’s okay if you don’t say thank— A-agh! What’s with this suddenness. Somehow, it feels really embarrassing… ehehe.”

Hajime smiled wryly while looking at Shia’s embarrassed state, and he asked of the doubts he had.

“Shia. Though I was just a little curious about it,… why did you unhesitatingly jump out at that time? You had never talked about anything important with sensei, right? I also can’t remember a timewhen you got along with her…”

“That is… because she is someone Hajime-san worried about.”

“… That’s all, huh.”

“?… Yes, I think that’s all?”
“… I see.”

Because of Shia’s astonished expression, Hajime expression ascertained that he couldn’t say anything more. Certainly, Aiko was Hajime’s teacher. His classmates would be impacted if she was gone.

He was honestly glad she didn’t die. However, he remembered he didn’t show it through his speech and behavior. Nevertheless, Yue and Shia seemed to be able to read what was in Hajime’s heart; they were people who always knew his heartfelt emotions. Though he only thought of it now, they had crossed the boundaries of being companions. Such understanding had crossed his mind.

Thus, even if Yue didn’t say anything, he thought to repay Shia with something. And so, Hajime who was still embarrassed spoke to her.

“Shia. Is there something you want?”
“Heh? Something… I want?”
“Ah. You can say it’s a thanks or a reward… Well, something like that. Of course it’s only something within my ability, okay?”

Shia was a little perplexed because of the sudden words. Since she thought what she had done was a natural thing to do for companions, she thought it was a little exaggerated. “U-U～n,” she groaned and when she casually saw Yue at his side.

Yue was watching Shia with a gentle expression, and then she nodded. Her gaze told her was it was okay for Shia to honestly receive Hajime’s gratitude, Yue was urging her. Shia, who accurately read the situation, let out a forced laugh. After thinking about a little, and she turned her gaze from Yue who revealed a smile while nodding towards Hajime.

“Then, please take my first—”
“Rejected”

“… Why? No matter how much I think, finally the dere time has COMEEE!!! It is that kind of time, right? Right? Please read the mood!”

“I said, ‘within my ability’.”

“That’s quite within your ability! Even though you always casually keep me away, you did it with Yue-san! I know it happened! My heart felt empty whenever I found out about your liaison! Woo, when we arrive at Fhuren, I’ll once again go on errand alone, and you will make love during that time, right? Sob Again, I alone… Killing time alone,… then I’ll pretend to not see Yue-san beaming… damn it…”

“No, pl—, there’s nothing to cry about… I am in love with Yue, and about you, well, I think of you as an important companion, but it’s not love… For me to embrace someone else is…”

“… Sob … Hajime-san, you good for nothing!”

“… Oi.”

“A wuss! A bastard who tricks a maiden’s heart! A good for nothing! You perverted voyeur!”

The time has come! , and she was about to say her wish with joyful expression, but Shia became indignant because she was rejected even before she finished voicing request. She let out all of her dissatisfaction up until now as she curses Hajime while weeping.

From the back seat, “Pfft… The man who annihilated several tens of thousands of demonic beasts is… a good for nothing… Pfft.”

“Unexpectedly, Master has a pure heart, if thou still haven’t been in that kind of relationship… it means this one whose ass’s first time was deprived has a step in the lead…”

Those words were heard although it said in whisper. Hajime seriously thought, should I throw them out of this car? , for a moment. However, Yue who was sitting by his side was somehow looking at him with a criticizing gaze, and he let out a “Guh”.

Following that, he spoke to Shia again with cramped cramped cheeks. In addition, he swore in his heart to punish Will later. About the other voice… he would leave her as is because he didn’t want to be her companion.

“Shia. Please lower the hurdle. If it’s another thing…”
“… Hajime, you can’t?”

For some reason, Yue hugged Shia. Shia said with a miserable voice as she clung to Yue, “Yue-saa~n”.

Obviously, Yue seemed to allow Hajime to embrace Shia. Recently, Yue has been truly spoiling Shia. Hajime had thought it was because of a deep friendship, but somehow it became similar to a big sister helping her troubled little sister. Moreover, the elder one was a sis-con.

His beloved woman was asking him to embrace another woman. Seriously, Hajime who didn’t know what this situation meant could only hold his head with both hands. However, Hajime also had something he wanted to say.

“… I, what my heart wants is Yue, only you. I don’t hate Shia, I think of her as an important companion, but… I can’t treat her the same as Yue. You know, I carry the desire to monopolize Yue. No matter what reason it is, I won’t allow her to be beside another man. You can think of it as being a narrow-minded or selfish, but… I want Yue to think the same as me, it’s something I desire. That’s why, even if it was Shia, could you pardon me from starting a relation with another woman?”

“… Hajime.”

With Shia clinging to her arm, Yue’s cheeks blushed and she looked straight at Hajime with moistened eyes. Hajime once again gently stroke Yue’s cheek with his hand as he returned her gaze, and the two formed a sweet atmosphere anew. Even the air’s color seemed to have turned pink.

The two watched each other faces as they gradually drew closer, then…

“… It seems I… have been completely forgotten… even though it was the talk about my reward…”

Shia was scowling with a dangerous tone as she stared at Hajime

and Yue who almost reached the climax. Then the two finally noticed their surroundings and hurriedly distanced themselves. Yue, who still felt embarrassed, was timidly twirling her beautiful hair to calm down.

Hajime, who confessed his feelings, had his heart thrown out of order because of the surprise attack. His expressionlessness crumbled, and his mouth naturally stammered for an excuse. The words of him wanting to monopolize her and to be monopolized, were heavy responsibility for a person, but Yue was extremely happy. Her heart shivered and she inadvertently forgot about everything except Hajime.

"… I see, I somehow understand the relationship between the three of you… Shia-dono has it hard."

"Annoyed … The bond with Yue is deep… though that'll be a hindrance to this one… Well, as long as this one will be abused, then it's…"

Will's expression looked as if he would vomit sugars as he tried to guess the relationship between the three. They didn't want to know of the existence of the pervert who started panting as she imagined something.

"… Hajime, I am sorry. But, Shia is also important… I want to repay her. So, please go out with her for a day inside the town… Can you?"

"Yue-saa~n."

Now, Yue was asking Hajime for Shia's sake. Shia, whose heart was broken had her head patted, and was now spoiledly pressing and rubbing her face against Yue. Hajime who saw their appearance answered with a wry smile.

"That's okay, I don't mind if it's just that much. It's not because Yue asked for Shia, okay? Even if Shia was the one who asked for it, I'll at least go out with her."

"Hajime-san… no, there's no need to be concerned about it, it's

okay as long as it can become an established fact!”

“… Seriously, you are…”

“Well, because that’s still impossible, I’ll endure it for now by increasing the favorability through the date. Once we arrive at Fhuren, please take me to the Sightseeing Ward, okay?”

“Ah, ah, okay.”

Because of that idea, Hajime thought to once again remind her that Yue was the only special one for him. However, Shia probably already knew, but she didn’t get discouraged. With a complex expression, Hajime thought, Well, it’s okay to let Shia do what she wants, as he acknowledged their date. There was no change to the fact that Shia was already an important existence for Hajime, and he could not be reluctant about it because it was something Yue asked of him. Thus, he confirmed he wanted to reward her for her hard work.

“What’s with this feeling of being an outsider. It’s the same feeling of slipping into another family’s get-together.”

“Hmm. This kind of ‘Ignoring play’ doesn’t make this one feel happy at all… Only lonely… Rather, isn’t it about the time someone responds to this one? Is it really okay for this one to be here?”

Will, who was sitting behind the front seat where the flirting and heartwarming scene had occurred, looked so uncomfortable. In addition, although no one talked to her, Tio whom participated in the previous conversation, unbeknownst to them, had boarded the carrier as she placed her head on the window where the carrier was connected to the vehicle.

Before the fight, she had asked permission to follow Hajime. In the end, she was left behind because her existence was forgotten, so she jumped into the carrier of the magic-driven four-wheeler in a panic. The look of her panting because of her cruel treatment, while peeping into the vehicle via the window, took everyone inside the vehicle aback, and decided to treat it as though there was nothing there.

At first, he tried to shake her off by doing reckless movements with a wild-like speed just like the one in the movies, but she used magic to her advantage to stick to them. Moreover, because she became more and more excited with ecstasy, they decided to just ignore her. The pervert: the more one reacts to her, the more pleased she became.

Because of the situation where no one responded to her, Tio was excited because she thought of it as some kind of play to ignore her. However, she began to feel the emptiness from the interaction of Hajime and the others, and finally complained to them. Even so no one respond to her, so Tio creeped into the vehicle from the window connecting the vehicle and the carrier. With her black and long hair hanging down, her appearance who slowly creeping inside was just like Sada**-san from a certain movie called 'The Ring'.

As expected, Will couldn't ignore the eeriness as he shouted, "Uwah!," and retreated to the side window. Reacting to his voice, Hajime and his party looked at the back seat.

"Ah? Ahh~, th-this one is stuck. The breasts have become hindrances… Can't get in. Sorry, Will-boy, but can thou pull this one in?"

Her breasts, which were far bigger than Shia's, were resisting the pull as they continued to change shapes because of the window frame. Tio asked, "Please pull this one, okay?," as she stretched her hands towards Will. Hajime, who saw the situation, silently pulled Schlag from his left holster. His hand moved over his shoulder and shot without any hesitation.

DOPANh!

"HMMmm!?"

The gunshot and the projectile flew outside, hitting the Tio's forehead, and the force of impact blew her back into the carrier. A clamoring and slamming sound resounded from the carrier.

"Wh-What have thou done. To suddenly do that… wouldn't it make this one excited?"

With flushed cheeks, she rubbed her forehead with a somewhat happy expression. She complained… not. Tio, from the Ryuujin tribe, said no more than a perverted remark. Maybe because she wanted to enter with her legs first, she thrusted them into the vehicle window. However, this time, her plump butt was stuck on the window frame, and her fascinating buttock somehow managed to get inside after some struggling.

Hajime silently fired Schlag in succession. And although he wanted to blow Tio's ass out of the vehicle, she was considerably stuck and thus didn't blown away thanks to the plump meat of her buttocks cushioning the impact. However, because she let out R18 moaning every time a bullet shot was into her butt such as "Ah, an!", "How intense!", or "Masterr~". With cramped cheeks, Hajime reluctantly stopped shooting. As expected, it was better to not become an acquainted to a pervert.

Yue, who idolized the Ryuujin race, felt that the image she had of them was nothing but a fantasy, and had pushed them to the back of her head, and was now covering her eyes in shock.

Tio who guessed the gunfire had stopped, somehow held her butt and breasts, letting out a sigh "Fuu~," as she finally got inside the vehicle.

"Haa, haa, geez… how indiscriminating. A Master who can't be helped. But don't worry, this one will receive any kind of love. That's why… it's okay to do more of it, you know? Even more intense is okay, too, you know?"

"Shut up, pervert. Don't lean forward and do not come here. If possible, open the door and jump outside now."

"Kh!? Haa haa… for Master to know what's best for this one… but, this one refuses. This one has already decided to follow Master. There's also the duty as Ryuujin race, and the thing about taking responsibility, there's no reason to separate. No matter what Master will say, this one will follow thee. This one definitely won't go away."

Tio who finally entered the vehicle spewed perverted words one

after another, and when Hajime coldly answered her, Tio's expression looked like she was further charmed by him. However, she firmly insisted to remain. Though it was spoiled by her own expression.

"Stop joking. What responsibility. It's nothing but the continuation of a fight to the death. Just be glad you weren't killed. Besides, your duty as Ryuujin race is about that Hero. The guy is the center of this summoning, so go to him."

"Don't want to. Definitely don't want to. Though this one doesn't know what kind of person that Hero is, this one thinks he wouldn't be able to ruthlessly and mercilessly punish this one just like Master! Beside, don't belittle this one! This one has decided whom this one would call "Master." This one not so frivolous to be able to change the feelings towards this one's master."

With her eyes fully open, Tio insisted while clenching her fists. Though it was said in a good manner, she eventually made a perverted declaration that she was happy to be treated mercilessly by Hajime.

"This one would chase thee even if thou art runs away, okay? When this one goes all over towns with the story about this one's first being snatched away. About this one's body that could no longer live without Master, doing different this and that kinds of things, it will be told along with Master's description as this one walks, okay?"

"… You are～"

With veins popped, Hajime dangerously narrowed his eyes as he thought of her as a seriously annoying fellow. Though he thought to just kill her, she wasn't an enemy and Yue would stop him, so he thought to just keep hitting her until she lost her memory. Nevertheless, she had an authentic sturdiness, and it got nowhere because she would just feel happy rather than being blown away along with her memory.

As the result, he could do nothing but glare at her with a disgusted expression from the bottom of his heart. However, his gaze only

made Tio's body convulsed even more. Her condition was already irrecoverable.

"Please don't make such disgusted face, Master. This one will surely be useful. Though Master's party are outside of the norm, didn't this one has shown the proof during that fight? Even if this one doesn't know Master's objective, please let this one accompany Master. Please, Master."

"That's physiologically impossible."

"Ah!!!? Haa, Haa… Nnh! nnh!"

Towards Hajime's words that completely stopped the flow of conversation, Tio was embracing herself with both arms as though she was enduring something while she was fidgeting. Seeing Tio in such a manner, not only Hajime but everyone inside the vehicle displayed disgusted faces. After a while, Hajime let out a deep sigh and his expression looked somewhat exhausted.

"… Although I want to say something, but it'll be useless no matter what I say, right? Just do whatever you want as long as you don't become a hindrance to us. I have no more energy to think about what to do with you…"

"Oh? Oo~, that's so, that's so! Hmm, then please take care of this one from now on, Master, Yue, and Shia. Just call this one Tio! Fufufu, it looks like it'll be a fun journey…"

"… Argh."

"P-Please take care of me too…"

Hajime sighed again when he looked at a happy Tio with his narrowed eyes. Yue groaned in dissatisfaction, and the perplexed Shia returned her greeting.

A new companion. A pervert from Ryuujin race; Tio, had joined them. And the party advances towards Neutral Commercial City of Fhuren.

# Chapter 5 : Aiko Gone Mad

Three days had passed since Hajime and his party left Ul.

Although there were vexing problems; such as how to dispose of the corpses of the demonic beasts, and how to repair the roughened ground, the townspeople were unhurt. A result that could only be considered nothing but a miracle. The good news was immediately spread to the people who took shelter, peripheral towns, and even the Imperial Capital. The returning townspeople met their lovers and families. Some were hugging their close friends, and the joy of their safeties wrapped Ul in a festival-like clamor.

The protective wall Hajime left behind was surrounded the town as is, and the people who were talking about the details of the fight were gesturing how it exceed the common sense similar to how storytellers talked about a myth as they looked at the roughened ground outside of the protective wall.

The people who took shelter, especially the children, had sparkling eyes when they heard the story. Without losing this opportunity, the merchants were already calculating on how to make money by turning Hajime's protective wall into the town's new specialty.

Thus, the townspeople who didn't know anything about Hajime and Aiko believed Hajime and his party were dispatched by the "Goddess of Good Harvest," and Hajime's wall was named "Goddess's Shield" to honor it. Furthermore, the white-haired, eye-patched boy; Hajime, was called "Goddess's Sword" and "Goddess's Knight" in respect. However, it was a different story when David and the other Knights, or rather the real bodyguard Knights, recalled what was said about Aiko and Hajime. They would rampage while shouting, "As expected, I hate that guy!!!" In the future, Hajime would writhe in agony whenever he hears his name, but that's another story.

It was somewhat a miscalculation that resulted in earning himself some embarrassing nicknames, but just as Hajime thought, Aiko's fame and popularity were through the roof. When she walked into town, all the people would turn around and focus their gazes on

her. Among them, there were also some who began to worship her while saying things such as “Bless us~.” In this town Aiko, who saved the people, was certainly seen as nothing less than a “Goddess.” The rumor had also already spread to the surrounding towns. At the very least, it might be correct to say that Aiko’s words carried more weight than the Church of Saints’ bishop, in the town of Ul.

The rumored Aiko was… safely supporting the town leaders in the town’s reconstruction, but although she acted cheerful around people close to her, her mind wasn’t there. The cause was the various impacts of the shocking truths Hajime had revealed before the fight. But above all, it was how Hajime killed Shimizu. The scene of that moment consumed her mind and gnawed at her heart.

Even today, after they finished their day duty and it was time for dinner, the students and bodyguard Knights were dining at “Water Fairy Inn,” Aiko just mechanically carried the food into her mouth and blankly looked some place else without registering the conversation of the others in her mind, only answering with the same reply.

“Ai-chan sensei… Ai-chan sensei’s magic is amazing after all! Even those roughened ground recovered quickly… Looks like it’ll return to normal in just a week!”

“… I see… that’s good.”

Sonobe Yuka, who noticed Aiko’s mind was somewhere else, intentionally talked to her cheerfully. She tried to somehow encourage Aiko, since she knew the source of her abnormal state. However, even Sonobe’s cheerful words only received an indifferent answer in return, like pre-typed-like words. Sonobe drooped her shoulders as she said “Still won’t do, huh~.”

“Aiko… did the mayor or the bishop said anything today? If you’re really troubled by it, I won’t forgive them for troubling Aiko, even if it’s the bishop. I am Aiko’s Knight after all. No matter when, only I will be Aiko’s ally.”

“… I see… that’s good.”

It was unknown whether David said those words to encourage Aiko or to seduce her. The remark on how he was willing to go up against the bishop was considerably dangerous as a Templar Knight, although it might not be important to David; the warrior of love. The “I” part was emphasized. In regards to going against anyone… it was also considered by the surrounding Knights, as they agreed with him while they directed sharp glares at their commander who casually made his advance.

However David’s casual appeal was easily tossed aside like the words coming from a certain long running TV program during daytime. It was doubtful as to whether or not she heard him. The expression on the student’s faces were saying “Serves you right~” to David who drooped his shoulders. The same expression was on the other Knights’ faces.

Without taking any notice of the students and the Knights, Aiko indifferently continued to eat without responding.

(…If, if only I had talked to Shimizu-kun more… If only I had noticed his feelings earlier… If I did, then something like that wouldn’t have happened… If, if he relied on his classmates… If, if I didn’t get taken as a hostage… If only… I died… then he wouldn’t have found it necessary to kill Shimizu-kun…

Why did he kill him… Even though they were classmates… Was it simply because he was an enemy?… Could killing someone be so simple because of such a reason? Was it so simple to kill a person?… How could it be done so naturally?…

That’s strange… Humans aren’t demonic beasts. To be able to kill without any hesitation… He,… was he someone who could easily kill a human?… If I left him alone, would he have been a danger to the other children?… Will the other children be safe since he’s gone?… As long as he’s not… Kh?!? What did I just think of!?… Stop. It’s not good to think about this any further!)

Presently, regret and self-condemnation repeated themselves in Aiko’s mind… Thus, if she thought of it unconsciously, the buds of fear and grudges towards Hajime would appear, she would deny them in a panic, and she would once again return to her first

thoughts, repeating the process. There was too much she wanted to think about, and there were also a lot things she didn't want to think of. Aiko's mind was similar to a library where the bookshelves had crumbled and unorganized information were scattered around in a chaotic manner.

Suddenly, a calm and warmth voice reached Aiko. "Aiko-sama. About today's dish, is it not up to your taste?"

"Eh?"

It was Foss Selo, the owner of "Water Fairy Inn." His voice was far from loud, it was actually said in a rather small voice. However, there was no one inside the inn who missed Foss's words. His calm and deep voice would reach anyone without fail. Even now, Aiko whose mind was caught in whirpool of thought easily heard his words, and it made her senses return to reality.

When she noticed she had cried out in a rather strange and loud voice, Aiko's cheeks flushed slightly as she turned towards the smiling Foss.

"U-Umm, what was it? I'm sorry, I was daydreaming for a moment."

"No, no, don't worry about it. I just thought the dish was not to your taste because you didn't raise your face. If so, I thought of sending out another dish…"

"N-No need! The food is really delicious. I was just thinking about something…"

Although Aiko said the food was very delicious, she herself couldn't remember what it tasted like. When she looked at her surroundings, her students and the Knights were looking at her with a somewhat anxious expression. She noticed what was on their minds, and she thought she mustn't continue the way she has been acting as she pulled herself together and continued on with her meal. However, she coughed in a panic when food entered her lungs.

Because Aiko was coughing with teary eyes, the students and the Knights were panicked. Seeing the situation, Foss casually prepared

napkin and water.

“I-I am sorry. To trouble yo-…”
“It is not a trouble at all.”

Although Foss saw Aiko’s blunder, he kept a calm smile which made Aiko feel grateful and relieved. Seeing Aiko’s current state, Foss narrowed his eyes and thought of something. He spoke with a small and still calm voice.

“Umm. Aiko-sama. Though it might be presumptuous, may I ask one thing?”

“Eh? Ah, yes. What is it?”

“Why can’t Aiko-sama believe what you want to believe?”

“Heh?”

Unable to understand Foss’s words, Aiko tilted her head as a question mark floated above her head. Because of that, Foss continued with a wry smile, “Looks like those words were too lacking.”

“Apparently, Aiko-sama’s mind is currently in serious confusion. There are too many things you want to think about, there are also things you don’t want to think of, and you don’t know what should you do. What’s best is to do what you want, even if you’re not sure of what you want yet. There are many things you don’t understand, which only increases your impatience, and become the impetus towards the vicious circle of confusion. Am I wrong?”

“H-How…”

Because he had correctly guessed what she was thinking of, Aiko instantly became speechless. Seeing her reaction, Foss calmly explained with a smile, “I’ve seen a lot of guests, after all.”

“During such times, it’s better to just ‘believe in what you want to believe in’ for now. But then again, people will overlook things if they only want to believe what they want, those words also came with such warning. That saying is correct. However, in my opinion,

people only act in what they believe in. That's why, I feel that during times when one 'can't move on,' it isn't a bad thing to 'believe in what you want to believe in'."

"… To believe in what I want to believe in."

Aiko contemplated in Foss's words. Aiko's mind was currently filled with regret and guilt which became a bud of doubt in Hajime as the hatred swirled around. Hajime was certainly Aiko's important student, but Shimizu who was also a similarly an important student to her was murdered. The moment she understood he was an existence who, according to situation, would deprive the other students of their lives. She recognized Hajime as a threat who would deprive her of her important people. Even so, Hajime was also her student, she couldn't simply cast him away. It was the same reason why she couldn't just abandon Shimizu, who tried to commit mass murder. That's why she was confused since because didn't know what to do. Though Aiko herself thought she had a difficult personality, she couldn't help it. Hatayama Aiko was a 'teacher,' after all.

Foss didn't know what happened to Aiko. He didn't know she was, in a certain sense, believing too much in what she wanted to believe in. Even so, he could see she had committed a large blunder since she couldn't move on after what she believed in had collapsed.

While he was lost in thought, Aiko's hands had stopped from partaking of her meal and began to get absorbed in her thoughts.

(To believe in what I want to believe in. I wonder… what is it that I want to believe in? One of the things is that I want all of the students to return to Japan. However, it's something that can no longer be fulfilled. Now what I want to believe in is for it to be possible to return home without any more losses…

His story. His story where a classmate tried to kill him. I do not want to believe it… he even said he will kill us if we were to become a hindrance to him. Towards a human who unhesitatingly murdered a person… Towards the enemy who threatened the students…

Even so, I do not want to believe it. Nevertheless, he actually killed him… killed Shimizu-kun without any hint of hesitation. That's why he's already… no, I must believe in what I want to believe in.)

Aiko closed her eyes as she tried to hold down the resurfaced dark feelings. The surrounding people were anxiously looking at her as she moved slightly while thinking of something.

('Because he's an enemy' is what he said, and 'I have no time for that'. He also feared Shimizu-kun will once again attack him and his important people if he let him live. That was something anyone would have thought of.

In reality, Yue-san and Shia-san wouldn't put so much trust in him if he was a cruel man. He only wanted to cut off the source of anxiety for the future of those children… It was why he couldn't let him live. In other words, he thought I wouldn't be able to do anything about Shimizu-kun…

To let Shimizu-kun live would mean I should have at least showed him I could reform Shimizu-kun, in which I didn't… In the end, I was powerless… Shimizu-kun was… Even so, to be killed in that manner… It meant Shimizu-kun was already weakene—… Kh.)

There was a clear reason why Hajime shot Shimizu dead. He was not a broken human who would think nothing of murder. He was not a monster who couldn't be understood. He wasn't an enemy who blindly harm the students. Aiko decided to believe in him because he was a 'student', and her words could still reach him. With such thinking process, she recalled the shocking scene where a student shot another student to death, and she tried to search for the reason behind it.

(That's right. I had forgotten it until now. To begin with, I was the one who asked him to help the dying Shimizu-kun, and that was the result. Shimizu-kun would have died even if he didn't do anything. It was completely unnecessary for him to purposely shoot him! So why?! Why did he do that?! To make sure he dies? No, there's no need for him to do such a thing. That child only had a few minutes left to live, it was why I asked him for his help, but there's nothing more left to be done. After all, there was nothing I could do…

Shimizu-kun was shot because of me— Kh!?)

Aiko opened her eyes widel She was aghast by the truth she had just noticed.

(… That's right. Shimizu-kun received the wound from the attack aimed at me. If nothing was done during that time, I would have surely died. It was my fault he had to die! But everyone was convinced Shimizu-kun was killed by him! He was the one who convinced us of it!)

It was her fault, it was her who killed her own student. Just like Hajime feared, Aiko finally realized the truth and paled in an instant. The existence of her students were Aiko's supporting pillars. The fact that she was the cause of one of her student's death broke Aiko's mind. The impact of the fact made her mind unintentionally turn on its defensive mechanism, and Aiko's mind blanked out. With her outlook wrapped in darkness, she thought of giving herself to the darkness. However, the words Hajime left behind revived her mind.

"If possible, please don't get demoralized."

At that time, her mind didn't understand it because of consecutive impacts. Even though it was troublesome to think well of the meaning behind those words, they were simple words if she thought hard enough.

(If, if he said those words because he had predicted my situation… Wasn't he worrying about me?… I, he noticed I would break down because I realized I was the cause of Shimizu-kun's death. That was the reason why… he unnecessarily shot him… to convince us it was he who killed him… so I wouldn't be crushed by guilt… to keep being a teacher…)

Aiko understood Hajime's sense of values. Therefore, she didn't think it was done entirely for her sake. Even so, there's no denying Hajime had rushed into action because he thought of Aiko. The closing of the door in Aiko's mind was immediately stopped right before it completely shut, and it began to slowly open once again. Her narrowed view once again broadened. Though there was still

the cold feeling like one of the coldest season inside her mind, but at the same time, there certainly was a small fire present.

(Looks like I was being protected by him… No, not only him, but a lot of people have protected me. The children by my side are protecting me even now. I only thought of protecting him, but I didn't realize I was also being protected… How immature of me. That's now's not the right time for me to keep trying to be independent…)

Aiko wore a resolute expression. However, her thoughts involving Shimizu-kun and the fact that she was the reason he was killed wouldn't disappear for the rest of her life. Even so, she couldn't just stand still because there were students who adored and relied on her as their teacher; she didn't want to. Aiko renewed her vow to do the things she could do as a 'teacher', even if the world had changed. In addition, she also engraved in her mind to not let her current ideals be shaken. There is already, without a doubt, fear or grudge against Hajime.

(He's a clumsy one… He understood I might hold a grudge against him, or I might even become his enemy… Now that I think about it, he received my words and it looked like he thought it over seriously… Could this possibly be his way of returning a favor?

When I think back, I've only been saved by him. He told me the truth, and in the end, he even saved this town. Moreover, during the battle, he fulfilled his promise and brought Shimizu-kun back. If I reconsidered those things, I've only been unreasonable. I only talked of my ideals… and I've pressured him with that… How truly immature of me. Even so, he saved us… even though his way of thinking is cold… Looks like parts of his previous self still remained… No, at the very least, he regained some of them, right? Could it be because of those girls?)

Once again, Aiko smiled wryly as she thought of becoming indebted to him. Even though her immaturity was shameful as teacher, she smiled as remembered the Hajime who had sluggish status in the beginning, transforming into a truly dependable man. Thus, even though Hajime had completely changed, she felt happy when she caught a glimpse of his previous self.

But at the moment, she guessed the reasons were Yue and Shia, the girls who were always close to Hajime's side. Aiko somehow felt a pain in her heart. Aiko inclined her neck, but she immediately thought of it as nothing but her imagination.

(Incidentally, I still haven't said my thanks to Shia-san who protected me. Even though she is someone I owe my life to… Next time, I must properly make sure to thank her… In addition, I also owe my life to him…)

About the poison and the raging development, Aiko reflected. She had not thanked Shia, and the other benefactor of her life, Hajime. It was only now that she recalled something sealed in the corner of her memory, and she blushed as though fire came out of her face.

(Th-That's just an artificial respiration! A lifesaving measure! There's absolutely nothing more than that! I-It's not like such an intense thing was my first time. I never thought of it as pleasant! Yup, I absolutely never thought of it like that!)

When she thought of the reason behind her flushed face, Aiko suddenly began to beat the table. She repeated her excuse to no one in particular.

In addition, even though Aiko was an adult, she didn't have any experience in love. Even so, it was true that with her lovely looks, speech, and behavior changed, becoming like someone who was seriously in love. After all, in Japan, there were only 'gentlemen,' who treated her seriously because of her teenage-like appearance. Aiko knew there were a lot of men who thought of her appearance as good, but most of them ended up as good friends because none of them wanted to experience shame in being labeled as something beginning with 'Lo'.

Since it was not unusual for people in their earlier teens to marry in this world, no one was bothered by Aiko's short height and childish face; the so-called a little girl's appearance. So even though David and the other Knights were serious,… her small experience in love and her small stature made her believe no man would be interested in her, since she didn't even notice the love call clearly sent by men from this different world.

Thus, the mouth to mouth life-saving measure Hajime had quite the impact on Aiko. She calmed her mind, and once again recalled the things that wouldn't get out of her head.

(… To begin with, he already has girlfriends named Yue and Shia… There were already two, so it doesn't matter if it increases by one. Just what I am saying?! I am a teacher! He's a student! Wait, that's not the problem! It's not like he thinks of me like that! Besides, he somehow managed to casually two-time! Illicit sexual relationships are forbidden! That's insincere! Love should only be one way!… To have two at the same time… Kh, how shameless! I won't allow such immoral relationships! Hmph, I won't allow it!)

The sound of her beating the table became louder.

(… But his feelings towards Yue-san is quite special. Though her style isn't so different from me… Could it be that h-he likes child-like women? F-For example, like me? No, no, no, what am I thinking! So what if I know his tastes! To begin with, he is eight years younger… Now that I think about it, aren't people from the Vampire race like Yue-san have a long lifespan? In other words, he likes child-like older woman? Wait, so what if I knew that! Return to your senses, Hatayama Aiko! You are a teacher! He is a student! You are disqualified as a teacher if a little kiss makes you confused!)

Maybe because she was done beating the table, she held her face with both hands, began shaking her head while saying 'No, no' , once again she beat the table, continued with another 'No, no' , and finally she shouted "I am a teacher—!!," as she began to pound the table with her forehead.

As expected, even the students and bodyguard Knights; the group who loves Aiko, was taken aback by her eccentric behavior. When Foss noticed Aiko, who started a one-man show, he said, "Oh my, looks like you've cheered up," with his unchanging calm smile. What a big person.

Afterwards, Aiko was able to come to terms with her feelings towards Hajime about this and that, and self-concluded that was only a temporary hesitation caused by unstable emotion. Thus,

there's no change, Hajime was her student. While it was necessary to deliver information about Hajime to the top management in Church of the Saint and the Kingdom, she also needed to be prepared to protect Hajime from them in case of emergency, since she was determined to return to the Kingdom.

Aiko didn't notice it. The thing about Hajime wasn't concluded, it was just put on hold. While she called the students in her mind as "that child," only Hajime was called "he."

Thus the feeling began to bud. The time when Aiko finally took notice of it would be a little bit more in the future…

# Chapter 6 : Once Again in Fhuren

There was no change in liveliness of Neutral Commercial City, Fhuren.

From the other side of the tall and gigantic wall, the town's clamor reached considerable distance, all the way to outskirts. There was also no change with the long lines on the gates. From tourists to merchants who were visiting because of business, and there were also all kinds of listless people because of the torment of waiting for their turns.

There was a man who gave off a gaudy feeling standing at the end of the line of people by the entrance where the inspection was taking place. He was accompanied by two flashy women, one on each side, who were also listless as they waited for their turn in dissatisfaction while sweating. For the time being, would it be better to ask them what happened or just watch them? — they gave off such a mood. Then, they talked about silly things such as how to improve their waiting condition to reach their turn faster when suddenly; the gaudy man heard an unfamiliar sound to his ears.

SCREECH!!!

In the beginning, the gaudy man ignored it as he tried to lift the mood of the two women by his side. However, when the merchants and two women beside him became pop-eyed while looking behind him, coupled by the sound getting gradually louder, he turned towards the highway and said, "What!"

Thus he also became pop-eyed as he saw the scene of a black box running on the highway as it created raging storm of dust. The people quickly raised a ruckus. Though there were those who tried to run away as they shouted 'Demonic beast!' , the speed of the box-like object was more than they could imagine, and it immediately reached them before they noticed it.

The gaudy man stiffened. The people in the line thought: It is

hopeless already!, with despair reflecting in their eyes.

At the time, when it almost collided into them, the box-like object, creak, creak, creak , half rotating as its rear part shook, and it immediately stopped while raising a dust storm.

People were staring at the stationary object, the magic-driven four-wheeler. Within the confusion of what had happened, the four-wheeler's doors opened. The ones who got off while ignoring and not thinking anything of the surprised people, were of course Hajime and his party. Yue, Shia, and even Tio were ignoring the gazes of the people. Only Will was saying, Sorry for the commotion! , as he bowed.

However, the people couldn't even hear Will's apology. It could be said they didn't even care about the fact that people were coming out from the never before seen object. Their eyes were glued to the beautiful girls and a woman who "U~n", stretched before them. When Yue, Shia, and Tio moved, "Hou," sighs of admiration of the people entranced by them could be heard.

Hajime was sitting on the four-wheeler's bonnet and said, The distance from here to the entrance, it looks like we need to wait for around an hour, huh~ , as he narrowed his eyes. His muscle had stiffened because of the long time spent inside the car, so he went outside in a carefree way when they reached the gate. Because magic-driven four-wheeler was mobile with the use of Hajime's direct magic manipulation, it was possible to move it without sitting on the driver seat, though the control difficulty was higher.

Hajime released the stiffness in his shoulders as his neck made cracking sounds. Yue got on the bonnet just like Hajime, went behind him, and began to rub his shoulders. Apparently she wanted to massage him. Hajime relaxed his body while smiling.

Maybe because Shia became lonely, she also sat down and drew closer to Hajime's side. When Tio saw them, she said, "Muh, this one will also participate!," as she emphasized her huge breasts and tried to cling onto Hajime's arm but… she was slapped by Hajime and she fell down. However, there should be no problem as she displayed a very happy expression under Hajime's feet.

“Hajime-san. Is it really okay to drive the four-wheeler until here? At the very least, I think we should hide it…”

“Nn? Honestly, isn’t it already too late? We have already rampaged so flashily. In a week, it will spread to even remote regions. Besides, I already had a thought that such a day would eventually come… It’s just earlier than what I had predicted.”

“… Nn, there is no more need for such prudence.”

Hajime answered Shia’s question as he shrugged his shoulders. Even though he planned to put a little effort, so that it will allow them to avoid any trouble, the battle in the Ul town should be spread quickly. So whatever his plan was, it should be useless now. That’s why, it was just as Yue had said, he stopped trying to not display his artifacts as much as possible, and decided to no more going about with such cautiousness.

“U~n, so that’s it. Well, because there will surely be actions by the Church and the Kingdom, it certainly is too late, huh. Though it’ll be better if we can get support from Aiko-san or Ilwa-san…”

“Well, in the end, those are just insurances. It is at the degree where it will be good if they demonstrate a good effect. To begin with, I have resolved myself to fight anything that might show up no matter what they are. Regardless what happens, I will just mow them down and move forward. That’s why it’s okay for you, Shia, to no longer act as a slave, you know? Do you want me to remove that collar?”

He thought the troublesome preparations made against the Church and the Kingdom related to Ilwa and Aiko would be something good if they would take effect in the end. Hajime didn’t think much about it. As the topic quickly came to a close, he said it was okay for Shia to stop acting as a slave while poking her collar. Outstretching his hand, he implicitly said it was no longer necessary to hold back to avoid troublesome things.

However Shia who quietly stroked and touched the collar, shook her head to refuse with somewhat blushing cheeks.

“No, it is okay to stay as is. After all, it was the first thing I got from Hajime-san… Besides, it is the proof I am Hajime-san’s… and I recently took a liking to it… That’s why, it is okay to stay as is.”

Shia said such things. Her rabbit ears moved about from embarrassment. Her appearance of when she was looking down, coupled with her being shy was truly cute. The men in the edge of Hajime’s view were pressing their nose as to suppress the dripping blood.

While Shia was still looking down, Hajime held her chin and made her look up. Because of his actions, Shia’s face became a deeper shade of red. That followed by the ground under the men’s feet also being dyed in red. Hajime took out a crystal with a beautiful hue from the “Treasure Box,” and placed it on Shia’s collar. To be more precise he used “transmutation” on the crystal.

Shia’s collar was to display that she was Hajime’s slave so it was of a boorish fashion. The telepathy stone and the other stones were installed without regards to any design as it was made in unostentatious manner. To begin with, it was made as temporary thing to not attract any trouble inside the town, so he disregarded the design.

However, if Shia liked it and wanted to keep wearing it, just a little, it could be said it was too boorish. Also, compared to the time he gave her the collar, Hajime’s feelings towards Shia had become gentler. That’s why Hajime thought to make the collar to suit Shia.

As the result, white and blue ornaments were geometrically installed on the black material and, the fragment of God’s Crystal was processed into a small cross that radiated blue light, installed on the front side which resulted in a mysterious-like collar… A choker even more fashionable than the ones sold on earth. There’s already no impression left of a dog collar used to restrain.

Hajime showed a satisfied expression towards his workmanship. Shia, who was entranced because of the feeling from Hajime’s fingers that sometimes brushed her neck, was startled when Hajime passed a mirror to her. Following that, she readily confirmed the choker on her neck with the mirror. There was certainly a choker

with mysteriously beautiful ornaments. The cross made out of God Crystal was indeed beautiful and suited Shia's eyes.

Shia was poking the cross with her finger and her mouth loosened in a wide smile. Afterwards, she embraced Hajime's arm as a truly happy smile floated across her face while rubbing her forehead on his arm, and continued with her thanks. Incidentally, her rabbit ears were also nestled on Hajime.

While Shia on his shoulder raised an expression of happiness, Yue on his back smiled slightly and stroked Shia's rabbit ears nestled on him. Tio who crept up once again received a slap.

Because of the pink-colored space that appeared out of nowhere, the people who returned from the impact of the unknown object and the appearances of the super beautiful girls, women began to pay attention to Hajime and his party with various feelings. The majority of the women didn't even envy Yue and the others' beauty as they let out warm sighs. On the other side, the men divided into those captivated by Yue and the others, those looking at Hajime with envy and killing intent, and those who licked their lips as they found out the commodity value on Hajime's artifacts and the girls.

However, no one faced Hajime and his party directly even now. The merchants seemed to restrain each other as they looked for a right timing to speak. Amongst them, was the gaudy man from earlier; he displayed a mortified expression as he compared the two women beside him with Yue and the others, and clicked his tongue. Thus he recklessly approached Hajime and his party.

"Yo, ladies. If it's okay, can— "

"Who do you think you are trying to touch without permission? Huh?"

"Hii!"

The gaudy man casually called out to Yue and the others while ignoring Hajime. If it was only calling them, Hajime's "pressure" wouldn't end up guiding him to fainting course. But, of all things, the gaudy man was trying to touch Shia's cheek.

Just from one look, the gaudy man was quite a good looking one. Therefore, he must have thought any women would fall for him if he touched and seduced them. However, Shia's gaze was cold and though she thought to deal with him before he touched her, Hajime's arm grabbed the gaudy man's head ahead of her. Moreover it was coupled with a thick killing intent.

The gaudy man immediately ducked his body and leaked a miserable scream. Hajime just ignored the gaudy man's appearance and threw him off towards the highway. The gaudy man reached the ground in tremendous speed 30 meters away. With his face shaving the ground, he ended up in a pose just like Nagoya's Shachihoko. And after advancing for ten meters more with only his head, he fell and was completely unmoving.

Within cloud of sand, the gaudy man laid on the earth without even twitching. The people who saw were dumbfounded because they just saw a person flew in an impossible orbit, and they turned their gazes to Hajime who created the spectacle. The two women who attended the gaudy man were timidly looking at Hajime, who glared at the surrounding with absolute zero eyes which made them shudder, and they disappeared somewhere while screaming.

The merchants who tried to restrain each other while saying, "You guys, I won't let you go ahead," from a while ago were now saying, "Please go ahead," as they mutually compromised with each other. Hajime said clearly, Who's next? , while glaring.

Because no one came forward, Hajime smiled in satisfaction, and he looked away from the surrounding people as he lost interest.

"Whoa, Hajime-san was angry for me~ Is this how he expresses his desire to monopolize me? Just one more step until that thing happens, right!"

"… Shia, do your best."

"Yue-saa~n. Okay. I will work hard~!"

"Hmph, it is of no matter how much thou art is valued~ Master. Isn't it okay to value this one, too? Please throw this one just like

that man, please?”

Because Hajime was angry towards the one who tried to touch her, happiness spread through Shia’s whole body. Actually, Hajime just couldn’t forgive him for trying to touch Shia as though she was his thing. There was no desire to monopolize her, but it was too late to correct her, though it was true that his action was because he thought Shia as someone important to him.

Incidentally, because Tio who looked at the blown away gaudy man with envying eyes tried to nestle close to him, Hajime still responded with a slap. “Aan!,” Tio who collapsed happily after saying with a captivating voice was glared at by Hajime with a truly cold gaze. However, she became even happier as she “Haa, haa,” got excited. Hajime let out a deep sigh and said, “This fellow can’t be helped anymore,” as he gave up thinking about her condition.

Hajime and his party were flirting with such feelings, Will who was outside of this got on and sat inside the vehicle while looking at the far distance to sort out his feelings. The line from before became noisy again. Hajime turned his gaze and apparently there were guards coming running. They probably saw the quarrel from a while ago. Rather, they might be trying to confirm what had happened because the gaudy man who was planted on the ground was still unmoving.

The three men who rode on horses while wearing simple armor approached Hajime and his party after asking the situation from the nearby merchants. One of the merchant pointed at Hajime’s party, then he pointed at the gaudy man. One of the men ordered one of his companions to go towards the gaudy man. The remaining two men approached Hajime’s party who were relaxing (flirting) on the four-wheeler’s bonnet. The two men’s eyes somewhat sharpened. Not because of duty… but because they envied him.

“Oi, you! What’s with this commotion! Beside, what’s that black box? Explain yourself!”

Though the man spoke oppressively to Hajime, there’s no force at all because he kept sneaking a look towards Yue and the girls. Hajime already expected this development as he looked at the

guard and briefly answered.

“This is my artifact. I threw that man away because he tried to put his hand on her. Can you believe it? How can he suddenly try to hug her? Look, she is frightened by that… Mister Guards, don’t tell me you’re going to ally with that sex offender? If so, we won’t go to Fhuren ever again… how can I be treated as a criminal while you defend the offender… right?”

Blah, blah , Hajime spoke in such manner about vague things as if they were the facts. Shia stuck to Hajime simply because she wanted to be spoiled, and she didn’t look frightened if one looked at her objectively. It was a tragedy! , Hajime warped his expression to sincerely appeal. Will on the vehicle said, “What a smooth talker,” as he stared at him but got ignored. The surrounding merchants who became the straight men said, “Rather than trying to embrace, he was thrown before he finished speaking,” or “Far from being frightened, it’s more like you’re flirting,” with small voices which were also ignored.

However, it was needless to say what their answer was, as it was obvious which one to believe between the words of a gaudy man and the side of beautiful girls and women. “That guy is the worst,” they easily believed him without examining it further.

Then at that time, one of the guards inclined his head when he saw Hajime’s party then he said, “Ah,” as if he recalled something then he whispered to the other guard to confirm it. Unknown to what was said, the other guard said in a similar manner, “Now that you mention it,” as he thoroughly examined at Hajime’s party.

“… You, are you Hajime, Yue, and Shia?”

“Nn? Ah, that’s certainly so…”

“I see. Then, are you returning from the guild’s branch head’s request?”

“Ah, though it is so… did a notification come from by the branch head?”

The guard nodded in consent towards Hajime's expectations. The guard immediately told them to pass the gate without waiting for their turn. They moved using four-wheeler and followed by the guards. The people in the lines were curious about what happened as they narrowed their eyes to watch them move, and Hajime's party once again set their feet in Fhuren.

* * *

Hajime's party were currently inside the reception room of the adventurer guild.

They were served with high-grade teas along with the cakes, and they unreservedly drank it while they waited for five minutes. The one who kicked the door open and jumped inside was Ilwa Chang who requested Hajime's party to rescue Will.

"Will! Are you safe!? Do you have any injury!?"

Casting aside his calm atmosphere from the past meeting, he didn't even greet them as Ilwa was confirming Will's safety when he saw him. It might be because he was very worried about him.

"Ilwa-san… I am sorry. It was because I said something unreasonable that you were troubled …"

"… What are you saying… It was me who introduced you to a dangerous commission… You really are safe… I can't face Greille and Sarria if something happened to Will… They are also quite worried about you. It'll be better if you quickly show your face to relieve them. I have reported to them about your safety. That information came to Fhuren several days ago…"

"Father and Mama are… I understand. I will immediately go to meet them."

Ilwa told Will where his parent stayed and nodded, telling him to go. Will once again expressed his gratitude to Ilwa as he bowed, then he formally greeted Hajime's party before he, as promised, went outside the room. For Hajime, he was glad it went well, but he seemed dissatisfied because he didn't make proper thanks.

After Will went outside, Ilwa formally looked at Hajime. Ilwa was smiling with a calm expression, then he deeply bowed to Hajime.

“Hajime-kun, thank you very much for this. I never thought you’d really bring Will back alive. I can’t express my gratitude with words.”

“Well, Will survived because he has good luck.”

“Fufu, is that so? There is certainly that… but isn’t it the truth that you protected him from tens of thousands of demonic beasts? Goddess’s Sword-sama?”

While he smiled radiantly, Ilwa called Hajime with his nickname from the previous battle against the large crowd of demonic beasts. Hajime’s cheeks cramped. Apparently, the guild’s branch head owned the method to transmit the information faster than Hajime’s movement.

“… That information spread quite fast, huh.”

“It is because of the guild executives. There’s also the artifact for long-distance report. And I also have my subordinate to follow you. Though I said that, he seemed to have been always left behind to wander around because of those unexpected movement type artifacts… It was the first time I heard him complaining. After all, he held the greatest ability to gather information.”

Ilwa said as he smiled wryly. It seemed he hired an observer since the beginning. It was a natural measure as a guild’s branch head, so Hajime wasn’t angry. Rather, he quite sympathized with the branch head’s direct subordinate when he thought of him always rushing around because of him.

“Even so, the situation was truly a serious one. I never thought the accident in the Northern Mountain Ranges area to be a sign for such great disaster… It was truly a good thing I asked you for that request. I’m also interested in the power that could annihilate tens of thousands of demonic beasts… Can you let me hear it? Just what on earth had happened?”

“Ah, I don’t mind. But, before that I ask you for Yue and Shia’s status plates… and about Tio—”

“Hmm, if those two get one, then please this one too.”

“… Is what she said.”

“Hmm, certainly, and the credibility will increase if I can see what’s in the plate… okay.”

After saying so, Ilwa called the staff and three brand new status plates were brought in.

As the result, Yue and the girls’ statuses were as followed.

Age 322 Years Old
Gender Female
Class Sorceress (Miko)
Strength 290
Stamina 296
Agility 296
Magic Power 3,822
Skills
Automatic Regeneration:
Pain Control
All Elements Aptitude
Compound Magic
Magic Manipulation:
Magic Emission
Magic Compression
Remote Control
Efficiency Rise
Magic Absorption
Composition by Imagination:
Rise in Ability to Imagine
Simultaneous Compound of More than Two Magic
Delayed Invocation
Blood Conversion:
Body Strengthening
Magic Conversion
Vitality Conversion
Magic Strengthening

Blood Pact
High Speed Magic Recovery
Creation Magic
Gravity Magic
Name: Lucia
Age: Unknown
Race: Human
Gender: Female
Class: Diviner
Strength: 6,120
Agility: 6,125
Magic: 7,980
Magic Resistance: 6,125
Skills
Foresight:
Automatic Invocation
Assumption of Future
Magic Manipulation:
Body Strengthening
Part Strengthening
Rise in Conversion Efficiency 2
Concentrated Strengthening
Gravity Magic
Name: Ellis
Age: Old
Race: Human
Gender: Female
Class: Guardian
Strength: 4,620
Agility: 3,480
Magic: 4,290
Magic Resistance: 3,480
Skills
Dragon Form:
Dragon Scales Hardening
Rise in Magic Efficiency
Rise in Physical Strength
Roar
Wind Clad
Pain Conversion
Magic Manipulation:
Magic Emission
Magic Compression
Fire Element Aptitude:
Decrease in Magic Consumption
Effect Raised

Duration Raised
Wind Element Aptitude:
Decrease in Magic Consumption
Effect Raised
Duration Raised
Compound Magic

Though their statuses didn't reach Hajime, theirs were at the level where not even a few of the summoned cheat group could become. It was at the level that couldn't even be reached by the Hero when he uses Limit Break.

As expected, Ilwa was speechless as he became slack-jawed. It couldn't be helped. Yue and Tio owned the skills such as "Blood Conversion" and "Dragon Form" which were peculiar skill for the races assumed to have been perished, and their statuses were too abnormal. Shia also completely ignored her tribe's common sense. It was strange to not be surprised by them.

"My, my… I had thought there must be something, but something like these are…"

Drenched in cold sweat, Ilwa's usual smile cramped when he saw the statuses, and Hajime uncaringly said in agreement. He listened to it normally, even if the silly contents seemed to be fixed through their lives, he could not help believing it because the numerical values and skills he just seen were proven by the status plates. When Ilwa finished hearing all of his stories, he sat deeply on the sofa with a weary look that made him seemed like he suddenly aged for at least ten years.

"… Indeed, you were able to catch Catherine-sensei's attention. Though I had expected Hajime-kun alone was someone from different world… the actual things are far more oblique, huh…"

"… Then, branch head-san. What will you do? Are you going to hand us over to the church as dangerous elements?"

Ilwa corrected his seating as he looked at Hajime as if criticizing his question.

“That joke is too cruel. You think I can do that? To become your enemy is an impossible choice as an executive of the guild… Also, I don’t want you to take lightly of me. You are my benefactors. It is not something I can forget for the rest of my life.”

“… I see. Then that’s good.” Hajime shrugged his shoulders and used his gaze to express his sorry and gratitude.

“I have even thought, at the very least, to become your support just as promised, as guild executive and as my own self. Well, at least I will show you that now. For now, I don’t think the people from above will do anything to you as their discussion became complicated. At least I will make all of you “Gold”-rank adventurers to make it easier to support you. Normally there would be various troublesome procedures to become “Gold”… I will somehow do it later. After all, there are Catherine-sensei and my recommendation along with your fame as “Goddess’s Sword”.”

Ilwa shown a lavish hospitality as he prepared a letter with his family crest, so they could use the VIP room of the inn directly operated by the guild while they were in Fhuren. If anything, though there was his gratitude for the recent event, he seemed to also want to create a friendly relationship with Hajime’s party. He spoke of everything in seriousness without having any reason to hide anything.

Afterwards, when they separated from Ilwa, Hajime’s party went to relax in the VIP room at the hotel directly managed by the guild in Fhuren’s Central Ward. On their way, they met Will’s parents, Count Greille Greta and Saria Greta, who came to greet them accompanied by Will. They were different from the nobles he had saw in the Royal Palace, since they seemed to be fairly logical people. He was convinced that Will’s goodness came from his parents.

Count Greille wanted to thank them by inviting them to his house by giving them money and goods, but he left with a message saying he’d help them if they were in trouble because Hajime firmly refused the rewards.

A wide living room: there were four other rooms beside the room,

and all of them were equipped with canopied beds overseeing the Sightseeing Ward from the terrace. Hajime was lying down on the super big sofa in the living room as he sighed in relaxation.

Yue lifted Hajime's head and rested it on her lap as usual. Shia was sitting at his feet, while Tio was looking around the room in curiosity.

"Let's rest for today. We will do things such as shopping and buying the food tomorrow."

Hajime narrowed his eyes as he felt pleasant from Yue's hand that was brushing his hair, and he said the schedule for tomorrow. Shia was waiting for it. She timidly shook Hajime's reclining body.

"That's~, Hajime-san. The promise…"

"… I remember. Shall I take you to the Sightseeing Ward…"

As the reward for Shia's hard work, Hajime promised to go on a date with her for a day. Shia was looking at Hajime with expectant eyes. Hajime was hesitating because it was necessary to procure the food, but Yue concluded his hesitation. Her soft hands were placed on Hajime's cheeks and she narrowed her eyes gently.

"… Tio and I will be the one shopping. So go with Shia, okay?"

"… Is it okay?"

"Nn… in exchange…"

"In exchange?"

Yue looked at Hajime and her best friend Shia, who was truly expecting the promise, with a gentle gaze as she exuded a big-sister-like atmosphere, and she urged Hajime. Hajime tried to confirm the continuation of her words with a somewhat complex look, and Yue's gentle expression changed into bewitching one as she licked her lip. She followed it by drawing her face closer to Hajime's ear and…

"… I want you to love me a lot tonight." She said.

Hajime covered his face with his hand and said, "… Nn," a Yue-like answer. That's all they needed. Though he was confident of being able to win against the guardian in the depth of the dungeon, perhaps for his whole life he wouldn't be able to defeat Yue or so Hajime thought.

"… Before I notice, they naturally began to make the world of their own… not surprising from Yue-san."

"Hmm, even so, this one feel the undiscouraged Shia is considerably strong. Well, this one has no problem because this one is satisfied as long as Master bullies this one… Shia has quite the obstacle～"

While Shia directed a, "As expected of Master," gaze towards Yue with respectful eyes, and Tio sent an interested gaze towards Shia and Yue's relationship where no envy could be felt. Afterwards, when Hajime managed to regain his senses that flew outside because of Yue's surprise attack, the four of them chatted, and the day grew into the night.

* * *

Extra

Midnight that day.

As the moon approached the zenith… two shadows stealthily moved to the terrace in the top floor of the inn directly managed by adventurer guild. The two dressed in black just like assassins, slowly killed their presences as they approached a certain room's window, and they silently look inside.

The things inside that room were…

"Fuwah! Please look at that, Tio-san! That intense… Yue-san will break you know."

"WHOOAA! Master is so intense! H-However, Shia. Yue's expression… is certainly bad! Even though this one is also a woman, this one can feel something strange…"

"Ack, it is definitely an enchanting expression that cannot be

resisted! She looks so happy~, I'm so jealous~."

"Mmm~, though this one is satisfied as long as Master bully this one… that kind of thing isn't bad, too~."

… After this, Hajime who noticed their presences, needless to say, gave the two peeping toms a harsh punishment.

* * *

Some information about the statuses:
Blood Pact — Drastic increase in status of the person whom is chosen to suck blood from.

Composition by Imagination — Magic array can be completely made just by imagining it.

Rise in Conversion Efficiency 3 — 1 unit of magic will be converted into 3 unit of physical strength.

Dragon Scales Hardening — Dragon scales can be further hardened using magic. It is possible to further increase the basic status using Dragon Form.

Author's Note: The statuses are still tentative. There's possibility of adjustment depending on the future development.

# Chapter 7 : Hajime becomes a Papa I

“Fufufufu~n, fufufu~n! What a fine weather~ It’s a splendid weather for a date~.”

In Fhuren’s main street, the rabbit eared girl, Shia, was cheerfully walking while skipping. Her clothing was different from her usual durable adventurer style clothes — it was a lovely milk-white one-piece dress. With narrowed collar, there was a big opening in the cleavage and Shia’s rich breasts were boing, boing! , swaying as she walked. A slender, black belt was attached on her waist. Her rich hip-line and the indescribably enchanting curve were clearly displayed. Slender, tight, and beautiful legs were extended from the skirt 15 cm above her knees, and the gazes of men were gathered on the pair of bouncing hills.

But the most attractive thing about her was her atmosphere and her smile. With blushing cheeks, I am happy, so it cannot be helped! , was overflowing from her without any effort to conceal it. About her being a demi-human or how she wore a slave’s collar-like thing, could be said as something trivial as the surrounding people fell for her. There were also elderlies who smiled as if they saw something pleasant.

Behind the ecstatic Shia, was Hajime who walked on with a wry smile. Maybe because she was so elated, Shia repeatedly walked a little ahead, and then turned around with a smile as she waited for Hajime to catch up. Just like the surrounding people, Hajime inadvertently smiled.

“Your spirit is too high, Shia. You will fall down if you don’t look in front, you know?”

“Fufufu, I won’t make such blunder~, after all I have been trained by Yue-sa—!?”

Because of Hajime’s warning, Shia turned around again as she replied to him, she almost fell down. Hajime promptly held her

waist to support her. Though there wouldn't be any problem considering Shia's physical strength, she wore a short skirt today. He would not let the men who pant as they looked at Shia to become lucky perverts.

"I-I am sorry."

"See, now that you understand, walk right beside me."

As she shrunk her body because of the embarrassment from being held by the waist, Shia demurely tugged Hajime's sleeve, and this time she began to walk in slower pace next to him. Because of how lovely she looked with blushing cheeks, most of the surrounding men seemed to have been knocked out. Some of them were because of the fists from the lovers by their side.

Hajime and Shia kept collecting the surrounding gazes, and they finally entered the Sightseeing Ward. There were various facilities inside the Sightseeing Ward. For example were theatres and street performers avenue, circus, music halls, aquarium, arena, game studio, observatory, colorful flower garden along with huge maze of flowers, and even beautiful buildings along with the plazas.

"Hajime-san, Hajime-san! Let's go to Meerstat first! I have never seen a marine creature before!"

With a guide book in hand, Shia's rabbit ears moved as though to express, "Let's go! Let's go!" She seemed to have never seen any marine creature because she lived in «Haltina Sea of Trees», so she wanted to go to Meerstat, a famous aquarium in Fhuren's Sightseeing Ward.

Incidentally, she was used to seeing freshwater fishes because there were lakes and rivers in the Sea of Trees. However, she felt they weren't the same even though the marine creatures were shaped similar to those fishes. Though Hajime thought them as only fish… he didn't say anything since he read the mood. Hajime was going to be nice to Shia today.

"Hee~, for marine creatures to be inland… that's the point. Though the management, maintenance, and transportation must be

troublesome…”

Though Hajime wasn’t interested at all, he didn’t reject it since he didn’t have any reason to refuse her. Furthermore, Shia was happily smiling as she pulled Hajime’s hand.

On the way in street performers avenue, their eyes were caught by people who did acrobatic as they challenged the human’s limit, when they finally reached the big facility of Meerstat. Maybe as to represent the sea, the whole building was painted in blue and there were crowds of people in there.

The interior was extremely similar to the aquarium in the Earth. However, maybe because they didn’t have the technology to make transparent water tanks that could endure the water pressure like the ones on Earth, bulky glass tiles were buried in the fence made of crystal-like metal, and it only somewhat visible.

However, Shia didn’t mind it. Her eyes sparkled from seeing the marine creatures for the first time, and she spoke to Hajime while pointing her finger. Right next to them, was a little girl with her family who also pointing with sparkling eyes. Unexpectedly, his gaze met the father-like person’s gaze and because Hajime noticed he looked at him with warm gaze. Hajime, who felt awkward, took Shia’s hand and moved elsewhere. Shia was surprised by Hajime’s action but she was happy he took her hand, and needless to say she returned his grasp while blushing.

After this and that, they enjoyed the aquarium for one hour, when Shia suddenly became wide-eyed when she looked at a certain water tank again, and began to stare at it.

Inside was… a Seaman. It was human-faced fish very similar to the one from the game Hajime knew.

“… Wh-why is he here…”

Shia backed away and trembled. Maybe because the Seaman noticed Shia, it turned to watch her with the same lazy expression from inside the water tank. The tension raised for some unknown reason. Because of two people, Hajime looked at the explanation

placed beside the water tank.

According to it, this Seaman was an aquatic demonic beast, and it capable of using peculiar magic called “Telepathy.” It seemed to be able to speak fluently though it rarely spoke, and he confirmed from the description that it was famous as a demonic beast one could converse with.

However, even if it was possible to talk to, it would only answer with an unmotivated voice as though the talk was very troublesome for it. Also, caution was necessary because the person it spoke to would become depressed as a side effect. It like alcohol and becomes talkative as it drinks. However, it wouldn’t be called a conversation as a person would one-sidedly continued to preach to the conversation partner… Incidentally, it was named Lehman.

Since Hajime didn’t know whether Shia was simply staring or if she was having at argument with it. However, when sweat lines started to appear on her face and she didn’t reply to him, or when he talked to it in the normal way, he used “Telepathy” instead.

“You, can you really use telepathy? Can you really converse? Can you understand my words?”

Because of the sudden telepathy, Lehman’s eyes twitched for a moment in response. It followed by shifting its gaze from Shia to slowly looking at Hajime. Shia whose expression expressed, Somehow I won! , was ignored.

“… Tch, this should be our first meeting. First, introduce yourself. That is how you show your manner. Good grief, this is why the young people these days…”

He was taught about manners by the fish with a face of an old man. He regretted his mistake. With cramped cheeks, Hajime tried to talk again.

“… My bad. I am Hajime. Looks like you really can converse. Just what is Lehman?”

“… You know. Just what is human? How can you answer that?

That's why, how would I know the answer. Well, I only can say I am me. No more no less. Also, call me by my name or whatever you like."

Hajime had thought, "Just how does it think…" But somehow it spoke about common sense, moreover it was rather cool. That was completely unexpected. Wasn't it written that it was unmotivated? , he wanted to complaint to the aquarium's staff. Hajime was slightly looking at the distance in escapism, but this time a question came from the Lehman.

"I also want to ask one thing. You, why can you use telepathy? There's no sign of the use of human's magic… It was as if you are the same as me."

It was nothing but a natural question. After all, a human was using the peculiar magic, "Telepathy." It was curious as to why he was able to casually use just like it. It might be the cause of why the rarely talkative Lehman was responding to Hajime's conversation. Hajime explained he was able to use it by eating the demonic beast that was capable of using telepathy.

"… That's a lot of hardships for someone so young. Okay, ask me anything you want. This old man will answer anything in my knowledge."

He was sympathized. Apparently, it thought he was so poor that there was no choice other than eating the demonic beast. When it saw his current appearance and he was wearing good clothing, it said as it sniffled, "Looks like you've worked so hard, good boy! It make me want to cry."

Hajime didn't correct it because it was the true he had some hard times. However, for him to be sympathized by a fish… it was somewhat depressing. He somehow managed to set it aside and asked Lehman various things. For examples, Does a demonic beast have a clear will? , How were the demonic beasts born? , Are there any other demonic beasts people can communicate with? , … Lehman answered that most demonic beasts didn't have clear will. It didn't know any other demonic beasts that could understand human language other than its species. Moreover, it didn't know

how the demonic beasts were born.

Moderate amount of time had passed as he asked a lot of things, and they began to gather attention because it was a surreal spectacle for the onlookers to see a young man and a fish with a face of an old man staring at each other. Shia, who began to feel restless, was tugging Hajime's sleeve, so Hajime rounded up the conversation.

Even though his conversation with Lehman was somewhat interesting, today was decided for him to go out and spend it with Shia. He would not neglect his promise. Lehman also said, "Oops, looks like I have obstructed your date," as it rounded up the conversation by reading the mood. By the way, they got along so well that they called each other with "Leh-san" and "Ha-boy." Hajime could see the "nobleness" inside the Lehman.

In the end, Hajime asked why Lehman was in such a place. The answer was…

"Nn? Just as I said before, I was traveling freely… but the underground water which I was swimming through suddenly sprouted outside and I was thrown away… Before I knew, I was in a grassy place beside a spring. Though I won't die even without water, I cannot move without it. When I tried to ask for help using telepathy… Well, I was brought here."

Immediately, a line of sweat flowed from Hajime's forehead. It was obviously the time when they got out from the Great Dungeon of Raisen. Apparently, Lehman was involved and was launched together with them at that spring. Though the real culprit was the idiot Miledi, there was no change that they got it involved.

Hajime, ahem , cleared his throat, then asked the Lehman.

"Ah~, Leh-san. That is, what can I say. Do you want to get out of here?"

"? That's, of course. For I am more suited for traveling freely. It is the best for a living thing to live the natural way. Rather than inside such a cage, I prefer to die in the ocean."

Lehman used lot of connotations in those words. Therefore, Hajime who liked the Lehman decided to help it because he was also at fault.

“Leh-san. If so, I will bring you to a nearby river. Apparently, your situation was caused by my party. Since I will bring you out in few minutes, please believe in me and I will quietly transport you.”

“Ha-boy… Heh, though you are young, to have such way of thinking… I don’t know what will you do, but no one should be able to match your power. I will believe in Ha-boy and wait.”

Hajime and Lehman exchanged manly smiles. As if understanding the their expressions, Shia’s cheeks cramped as she said, “Huh? Don’t tell me another rival?” Hajime pulled Shia’s hand as he turned on his heel from the place. Although the reason was unknown, the Lehman used “Telepathy” to Shia who followed Hajime.

“Little miss, I am sorry to surprise you back then. Don’t let go of the hand tied to Ha-boy’s.”

“Heh? Heh? Umm, well, there is no need to worry about that! I have my first kiss with Hajime-san thanks to that! Also, I definitely won’t let it go!”

Though she didn’t understand, Shia firmly answered. Lehman displayed a satisfied smile as it looked at Shia. “How meddlesome,” Hajime prayed for his new friend’s good luck from now on as he left the Meerstat aquarium with a wry smile.

After a few minutes, a claw crane broke through into the lower part of the aquarium. It crushed Lehman’s water tank, used the arm to catch the Lehman that came out along the water splendidly, defeated the staff members who were after them (there were no injury). Furthermore, it destroyed a wall to get out and disappeared far into the sky; these kinds of things happened. There were commotions about whether it was a new kind of demonic beast or the Lehman’s hidden ability… but that was something trivial.

* * *

At that time, on the other side…

Yue and Tio were shopping inside the Commercial Ward. Even so, because there were already a large amount of necessary thing inside Hajime's "Treasure Box," they could only replenish a small amount of the things they consume in their travel. Therefore, rather than shopping for food, the two were just indifferently wandering around the various shops in the Commercial Ward.

"Hmm. Even so, Yue. Art thou really okay about that?"
" ? … About Shia?"

"Mm-hmm. It is possible that various things had progressed right now, thou know? Have thou thought of that?"

Tio was questioning Yue, who was judging the things exhibited in the boutique. Her tone was filled with some curiosity. Is it okay to be this calm? Isn't it possible she passed thou? Tio was interested in the mysterious relationship of the three. Because they would be traveling companions from now on, she wanted to converse without reserve for once.

On the other hand, Yue wasn't was shaken. She simply shrugged her shoulders and looked at Tio. There was no sense of crisis at all.

"… I am happy if it happens."

"Happy? Though the man thou love becomes intimate with another woman?"

"… It is not another woman. It's Shia."

When Tio inclined her head, Yue continued to talk as she walked around the shop.

"… In the beginning, when she tried to get close to Hajime… I was annoyed because she clearly had another intent… However, I understand now."

"Understand?"

"… Nn, that girl always did her best. Always used her utmost effort.

All for the sake of her important things and the things she loves. She is straightforward for the better or worse."

"Hmm. This one understands just by seeing her… Is that why thou have such a bond?"

Tio smiled when Shia, someone she was associated with only for a short time, floated in her head. She naturally smile as she thought of the moodmaker girl, whose smile didn't disappear even with the hardship she has experienced for being a demi-human. Moreover, although there were a lot of disappointing things about her because she was still young, Tio liked Shia. However, she thought it was a weak reason to allow her to go on a date with Yue's lover. In the end, she wanted to confirm another reason than Yue just liking Shia.

"… The other is."

"Other? What doest thou mean by other?"

Because of Tio's questioning face, Yue began to smile as she answered.

"… Shia also likes me. At least as much as Hajime. They are the same even though they have different meaning… Isn't that cute?"

"… Indeed… Master and Yue, ye both are necessary for that child… There are only few people who could be fond of the one who treated them unkindly. That might be her virtue. Hmm, this one thought this one understood what Yue thinks of Shia… But what about Master? Have thou thought Master might be captivated by her? Don't thou understand that child's charm?"

Yue shrugged her shoulders as if those things were ridiculous, and this time she displayed a bewitching smile. Eyes narrowed, cheeks blushed, she licked her lips. Her seductiveness overflowed from her body though she was small just like a little girl. Men and women who were walking around them stopped to look at her. In the following moments, accidents appeared here and there; pedestrians collided because they walked while their eyes were still nailed on Yue. Overflowing sensuality came from Tio's voluptuous body, but

beside her was blurred. Tio recalled the time when she peeped at Yue last night and she became charmed by her.

"… I want to increase Hajime's "important ones." However,… only I am "special"… if you think you can take him, then try it. No matter the time, the place, or who it is… I will be the winner."

"Can you do it?", Yue implied the declaration with a smile, and Tio backed away from the force she felt coming from the gap of Yue's usual expressionlessness. Because she backed away unconsciously, Tio revealed a surprised expression and she raised both hands to show she gave up with a bitter smile.

"Well… this one never thinks of starting a fight. This one feel it is enough as long as Master abuse this one."

"… A pervert."

Yue looked at Tio with an amazed expression while the person in question only laughed cheerfully. Thus, Yue, who had guessed Tio was trying to find a way to relate with them when she purposely began such talk, could only sighed because the Ryuujin race she longed for turned out to be a pervert. However, she smiled wryly as they seemed to be able to get along.

As such, the distance between Yue and Tio slightly shortened as they went out of the boutique and,

BOOM!!

"Guwa!!"
"Ahhh!!"

The wall of a nearby building was immediately destroyed, and the screams of two men could be heard from there as they appeared with their faces planted on the ground. In addition, several men were also blown away from the window of the same building just like pinballs as they screamed. Sounds of destruction resounded from inside the building, and with that, the wall cracked and collapsed as though the building received a severe earthquake.

With several tens of men convulsing with their limbs bent in strange

directions as they lined up on the street. The building that could no longer endure the damage finally collapsed with a tremendous roar.

Among the onlooker who had scattered in a distance, Yue and Tio perceived familiar voices and presences. Thus, they stayed in their places and they looked inside the scattered dust with amazed expressions.

“Ah, ah, these are the two’s presences, as expected…”

“Huh? Aren’t those Yue-san and Tio-san? Why are you here?”

“… That’s our line… You are overdoing it for a date.”

“Seriously~, well? Oh Master, just what kind of trouble hath art thou gotten involved in this time?”

Just as Yue and Tio perceived, what appeared from the scattered dust were Hajime and Shia. The two should be on a date now, but they approached Yue and Tio with familiar weapons on their arms. She was wearing adorable clothing, so the appearance of Shia who shouldered a brutal weapon was truly a surreal one.

“Ahaha, even I never thought it will turn into such a date… It just that the development… we destroyed a facility related to an organization that trades people…”

“… What kind of development resulted in fighting an underground organization?”

Yue displayed an amazed expression as Shia let out dry laugh. Tio was looking at Hajime asking for an explanation.

“Well, we are rather short handed for now. So can you help me after I explain the situation?”

As he put Donner into the holster, Hajime threw away the men who tumbled on the ground like pebbles as they obstructed his way. While looking at the piled up men with a leer, Hajime began to explain the situation to Yue and Tio.

# Chapter 8 : Hajime becomes a Papa II

After they left the Meerstat aquarium and ate their lunches, Hajime and Shia strolled around the maze of flower beds and street performers' avenue. In Shia's arm, there were many wrappers of food item bought from various stalls, and she was currently occupied with the vanilla-like ice cream.

"You ate a lot… Were they that good?"

"Nom… Yes! They are really delicious. As expected of Fhuren, even the level of their food stalls are high."

"…You'll grow fat if you eat too much."

"…Hajime-san, those are words that shouldn't be said to a woman."

Because of Hajime's words, the hand she was using to eat stopped for a moment as she made excuses under her breath, "I will exercise later… I will also eat less tomorrow…," and Shia continued to enjoy the sweets from the stalls. While Hajime walked beside Shia with a wry smile, his expression changed suddenly to a dubious one. He turned around and looked down.

Shia noticed him and asked while inclining her head, "Nn? Is something wrong, Hajime-san?"

"Nn—? The sign perception perceived a worrying presence…"

"Did you use the sign perception?"

"I always activate it as precaution."

"U~n? But, are you that worried? And even if you say a presence…"

Shia looked at the surrounding, she tilted her head and said, "There are a lot of people around, you know?"

“No, that’s not what I mean… What I perceived was from below?”

“Below?… you mean the drainage? Umm, wouldn’t it be the maintenance staff?”

“If so, then I wouldn’t be worried about it. It’s a small and weak presence… Maybe it’s a child? Moreover, a weakened one.”

“Eh!? Th-That’s bad! I-It is possible the child fell into a hole and drowned! Hajime-san! Let’s chase after it! Show me the way!”

The moment Shia heard Hajime’s explanation, she immediately ran. Although Aiko’s words about his “lonely way of life” had been etched in his heart, but the truth was that Shia moved faster than him, which made him smile wryly. Shia’s brightness and straightforwardness seems to have been a good influence on Hajime.

Shia and Hajime chased after the moving presence underground with a moderate speed. From the town’s structure, they expected the drainage to flow along the street. When they immediately passed by the presence, he pressed his hand on the ground to transmute it. Red sparks kindled, and a hole connected to the underground immediately opened.

Hajime and Shia unhesitatingly jumped into the hole. He then used “Aerodynamic,” held onto Shia right before they fell into the drainage that released the bad smell, and they landed on the passage on both side of the waterways.

“Hajime-san, I can also feel the presence. I will jump and pull it!”

“No, it is okay.”

Hajime stopped Shia, who tried to jump without minding that her clothing would be dirtied, by holding her neck root. He then once again pressed his hand on the ground and used transmutation. A lattice was created along with red sparks in the waterway. Because the lattice was set diagonally up, the child being swept away moved towards them and stopped when caught by the lattice. Hajime operated the gimmick in his left arm. His arm extended to catch the

child, and he pulled it to the passage.

“This child…”

“Well, this child is still breathing… Let’s get out of here for now, the smell is very bad here.”

Seeing child they saved, Shia widened her eyes in surprise. Hajime also had knowledge of the child’s appearance, so he was surprised in his mind. However, their current location wasn’t good physically and mentally, so they moved to another location.

Somehow, since it didn’t seem to be an accident where a child fell into the waterways and drowned, Hajime who was hesitating to return to the street from the hole he created earlier, used transmutation close to the hole and opened another hole in the drainage passage after recalling the arrangement of the buildings on the surface. Thus, while holding the small child wrapped in a blanket he took out from the “Treasure Box,” they began to move.

Red sparks suddenly appeared in a certain back alley, and a hole opened on the ground. The ones who jumped out from there were Shia and Hajime carrying a small child with him. Hajime used transmutation to close the hole and he shifted his gaze back towards the child he was holding.

From the child’s stature, he or she should be around 3 or 4 years old. With long emerald green hair, and though the child was dirty, it didn’t change her lovely features. The child should be a girl. However, the most eye catching thing were her ears. Unlike humans, her ears were fan-like fins. In addition, what peeked out from inside the blanket were maple-like small hand, and a folded thin film attached in between her fingers.

“Looks like this child came from Sea-dweller tribe… Just why is she in such a place…”

“Well, I am certain it wasn’t for a good reason.”

The Sea-dweller tribe was a tribe with considerably special position even among the demi-human races. They lived in «Seaside Town of

Elisen», located offshore of the sea right beside «Great Dessert Guryuu-en» in the west of the continent. Using their special characteristic, the tribe caught 80% of the marine products that appeared in the market in this continent. It was the reason why they were publicly protected by Herrlicht Kingdom even though they are demi-human race. In the end, it was all about the money, since they were protected because they could be used even while the discrimination continued.

That was why it was unbelievable for a person of the Sea-dweller's tribe, who were being protected, to be washed away in the drainage of an inland's big city, even more so when it was a child. The smell of crime was intense.

As they were thinking of the girl from the Sea-dweller's tribe, her nose twitched, her eyes opened and blinked. Then, the big, circle pupils, began to stare at Hajime. Hajime, whose gaze somehow met hers, didn't look away and stared back. With the unknown tension floating around, Shia, who seem to know something, approached her with an amazed expression. Suddenly, the stomach of the girl from the Sea-dweller's tribe let out a cute growling sound. With her nose twitching again, she moved her gaze from Hajime and her eyes locked on the wrappers Shia bought from the stalls.

'These?' Shia thought as she tilted her head and moved the wrappings with skewered meats inside from right to left. Just like magnet, the girl's gaze followed. Apparently, she was quite hungry. Shia tried to take out the skewered meats from the wrapping while Hajime began talking to the girl while transmuting.

"Okay, what's your name?"

The girl whose eyes were captivated by the skewered meats Shia was holding was surprised and ducked her body when bright sparks suddenly appeared from the ground followed by a floating square box. Hajime asked her name once more, and after her gazed wandered around for a while, she said her name in small whisper.

"… Myuu."

"I see. I am Hajime, and this is Shia. Then, Myuu, if you want to eat

the skewered meat, first wash off the dirt from your body."

Hajime took out clean water he saved inside the "Treasure Box," and filled the bathtub he just transmuted. In addition, he adjusted the water temperature using a flame ore and the improvised bath was completed. It is very dangerous eat a meal with a body dirtied by drainage. Because she seemed to have drank the drainage water, it was necessary to take detoxifying and bactericidal medicines (marketed commodities).

Not long afterwards, Myuu responded by taking off the blanket along with her clothes dirtied by the drainage, and entered the bathtub. "Ekk!," though her body was cringed as though she was frightened, she then narrowed her eyes when her body gradually got warmed up. Hajime handed the medicines and towel to Shia, passed the soap to Myuu, and he went out to the back alley to buy Myuu some clothing.

When Hajime returned from the back alley after purchasing Myuu's clothing, Myuu had already gotten out of the bathtub and was currently being held by Shia, wrapped in a new blanket. While Shia was holding on to Myuu, she said "Ahh," as she peeled off pieces of meat and fed it to Myuu's small mouth — chewing to the utmost. Her dirtied hair regained its emerald green shine, and the reflected light created a halo around her head.

"Ah, Hajime-san. Welcome back. Although it's amateur judgement, there's no problem with Myuu-chan."

When Shia noticed Hajime's return, she reported while continuously stroking Myuu's moist hair. Maybe because she also noticed Hajime's presence, she began to stare at him again while still chewing. She might be judging whether he was a good or bad person.

Hajime responded to Shia's words by nodding, and took out the clothes he bought. It was a milk-white, feminine one piece dress, one that looked similar to the one Shia was wearing. In addition, there was a gladiator sandal-like footwear, and underwear. Because the items were for children, he was worried about the shop clerk's eyes when he bought them.

Hajime walked towards Myuu, took off the blanket, and put on the one piece dress over her head, quickly followed by the underwear. He knelt before Myuu and put the sandals on each foot. In addition, he took out an artifact that lets out warm air — in other words, a blow dryer — from the "Treasure Box," and dried Myuu's moist hair. Myuu stood completely still but although she continued to stare at Hajime, she gradually narrowed her eyes when pleasant warm air blew.

"… What can I say. Looks like Hajime-san is good at taking care of others."

"What are you saying out of the blue…"

Although Hajime frowned at Shia's words while he was still drying Myuu's hair, his appearance was the evidence he was good at taking care of others, so Shia's cheeks loosened with a smile. Hajime somehow felt embarrassed and averted the topic.

"Well, about what to do…"

"About what we should do with Myuu-chan, right…"

Because she understood the two were talking about her, Myuu alternately looked up between Shia and Hajime.

For now, Hajime and Shia decided to hear Myuu's situation.

As a result, the content Myuu spoke of with her faltering voice was almost exactly what Hajime had expected. On a certain day, she got lost while she was swimming with her mother in a nearby coastline, and while she was wandering around, she was suddenly captured by a man from the human race.

After many harsh days had passed, she was transported quite a distance to Fhuren, and was then put in a dim, prison-like place. Inside the place, there were a lot of children of the human race. After she spent who knows how many days inside, several children who were with her were taken out on a daily basis but never returned. A slightly older boy said they were going to be displayed to guests and priced.

When it was finally Myuu's turn, there was by chance a drainage maintenance that day, so the hole leading to the underground waterway was open. Myuu, who heard the nostalgic sound of the water, immediately jumped inside. Usually, there was nothing a 3 or 4 year old could do because the hurdle was too high, but fortunately, she wasn't handcuffed. Myuu swam with all her might while enduring the unpleasantness of the filthy sewage. Though she was young, she was a child of the Sea-dweller's tribe. The men could do nothing but run on the passageway to try and catch her, but failed to do so while she rode the current.

However, because she wasn't accustomed to long travels, coupled by the stress of getting kidnapped, the unpalatable food, and the bad environment where she was soaked inside the drainage for a long time, Myuu finally lost her consciousness when she reached both her physical and mental limits. Her consciousness faintly returned thanks to being wrapped in a warm back, and she noticed she was being held by Hajime.

"The guests set the… price. An auction, huh. For children ranging from the human race and Sea-dweller's tribe to be there, it should be an underground auction."

"… Hajime-san, what should we do?"

Shia, who looked distressed, embraced Myuu closely. Her eyes were clearing expressing she wanted to do something about it. It was normal for the demi-human race to be captured and turned into slaves. Shia who was deprived of her family because of it, understood the fear and pain.

However, Hajime shook his head.

"It should be better to entrust her to the security office."

"That's… you're going to abandon this child and the other children…"

When Shia heard Hajime's words, she gritted her teeth. She closely embraced Myuu as she received the shock and looked at Hajime. What Hajime meant as security office was an organization similar to

the police force on Earth. By entrusting her to the government-like facility, Myuu could be separated from them. Although it wasn't an abandonment but a regular procedure of finding lost children, Shia didn't think so.

Hajime tried to explain it to Shia in an easy-to-understand manner.

"You know, Shia. It is the natural thing to send the lost children you find to the security office. Even more so when Myuu is a child of the Sea-dweller tribe. She will surely be protected by them. In addition, to auction someone from Sea-dweller tribe is a great problem. They will investigate it and the other children will be saved. Isn't that enough? Though I'm just guessing, this is probably the dark side of this big city. When Myuu was caught, she would surely placed in a location where the public officials couldn't get their hands there. In other words, this is Fhuren's problem. That's why, isn't it necessary to report it?… Considering your circumstance, I understand your feelings of wanting to do something, but…"

"Th-That… that is true… But, at the very least can we be the one who take this child? After all, we are going to the sea in the west…"

"Haa~, listen. We are going to the Great Volcano first. Don't tell me, are you going to take her along to the dungeon? Or, are you going to tell her to wait in the desert alone? In the first place, we will be considered as the kidnapper's comrade if we take the kidnapped child of Sea-dweller tribe without permission. So, don't say anything unreasonable like this."

"… Uuh, I understand…"

Apparently, in just a short time, Shia had come to adore Myuu. Maybe because she read the mood regarding her situation, Myuu clung onto Shia tightly. Myuu seemed to like Shia as well, and felt the need to resist parting from her.

However, what Hajime had suggested was the right thing, so Shia could only nod and droop her shoulders. Hajime bowed to match Myuu's gaze, and began to explain in a way Myuu could understand him.

“Listen, Myuu, we are going to bring you to people who will protect you. Though it might take time, you will surely be returned to the sea in the west.”

“…What about Onii-chan and Onee-chan?” Myuu asked what the two were going to do with an uneasy tone.

“I am sorry but, it will be a goodbye.”
“No!”

“Wait, it shouldn’t be—”
“No!”

“…”
“Myuu is okay with Onii-chan and Onee-chan! Myuu want to be together!”

Hajime flinched because of the strong rejection. Myuu began to flail around on Shia’s lap, just like a spoiled child. Until now, they thought of her as a quiet child, but that apparently was because she was still trying to ascertain Hajime’s and Shia’s character. Maybe because she judged them to be people she could trust, she acted spoiled. However, she might still be an originally quiet and a bright child.

Hajime didn’t feel bad to be trusted by her, but it was necessary to report the situation to the official, and they could not take Myuu along as they were going to conquer one of the Great Dungeons, «Great Volcano» on their way. Even so, “No— —!!,” Myuu rejected with all her might, so he gave up on persuading her, and just took her in his arms to bring her to the security office.

Because Myuu didn’t want to separate from the people she met miraculously and could actually trust, she strongly pulled Hajime’s hair, eye-patch, and scratched his cheeks on the way to the security office as a form of resistance. If not for Shia smiling courtesy beside him, Hajime would have likely been reported as a kidnapper. With his hair in a mess, one eye shut because his eye-patch was removed, and the scratches on his cheeks, Hajime arrived at the security office and explained the circumstances to the pop-eyed security personnel.

The expression of the security member who heard the circumstances steepened, and promised to protect Myuu inside the security office, together with the investigation and procedure to bring Myuu back to her home. Just as Hajime had expected, it was a big problem, and he wanted to excuse himself since the reinforcement should arrive immediately from their headquarters. However…

“Does Onii-chan hate Myuu?” Said by the little girl with moistened eyes together with an upward gaze, no sane person would be able to endure it, including Hajime. “Uh.” He groaned. Although he perseveringly explained she would be able to return home if she was with the security uncle, Myuu’s sorrowful expression didn’t let up in the slightest.

The security member couldn’t endure it any longer, somewhat forcefully separated Myuu from Hajime’s party while he was trying to calm her, and Myuu pulled the man’s hair while letting out a sad voice. Hajime and Shia had finally left the security office, but naturally, they didn’t feel like continuing their date. Shia’s eyebrows were wrinkling in worry while she kept looking back at the security office.

Before long, the security office was no longer in sight, and Hajime wanted to say something to make the depress Shia feel better in a place considerably far away from the office. But at that time…

BooOOooMm!!!!!

An explosion occurred behind them, and black smoke could be seen. The location was,

“Ha-Hajime-san. Over there is…”
“Tch, the security office!”

That’s right. The place the black smoke was coming from was the security office where they were before. The two nodded at each other, and ran back towards the security office. The worse thing that could happen with such timing entered their minds. The organization which kidnapped Myuu blasted the security office along with Myuu to prevent information leakage.

Suppressing their impatience, they reached the security office. What entered their view were the spectacle of windows' glasses along with the door of the office blown and scattered into the street. However, the building itself didn't that damaged, so there's no worry of it collapsing. Hajime and Shia entered the building and they discovered the uncle from security collapsed under a cover.

The security officer had both his arms broken, and was unconscious. Similar thing happened to the other security members. Fortunately, there was no life-threatening injury. While Hajime was looking at the security members, Shia went to investigate other places, and returned with a hurried look.

"Hajime-san! I can't find Myuu-chan! Beside th-this!" What Shia handed over was a sheet of paper with something written on it.

"If you don't want the child of Sea-dweller tribe to die, come to __ __ with the white-haired girl from Rabbit-man tribe."

"Hajime-san, this is…"
"Looks like these guys are greedy ones…"

Hajime crumpled the paper in his hand and revealed a savage smile. Those guys probably heard the conversation between Myuu and Hajime's party's in the security office by some means. Afterwards, they judged Myuu was useful as a hostage, and they didn't kill her to silence her because of the thought of obtaining a rare Rabbit-man.

Beside Hajime, was Shia who wore a resolute expression.

"Hajime-san! I-!"

"Say no more. I know it now. These guys are my enemies… No more tedious talk, we will crush them all and take Myuu back."

"Yes!"

Truthfully, Hajime thought it would be better to quickly separate from Myuu because he didn't want her to have to accompany them to such a dangerous journey. After all, Myuu would only have painful times if they unskillfully gave affection to a mentally

cornered child. However, he could not leave her when she has been kidnapped for the second time. There was time, and there was something he could do. So to leave such a small child while she's in a predicament would surely be "a lonely way of life." In addition, if he decided to abandon her with the reason of her being unrelated to them, Shia would surely grieved about it.

Furthermore, the other party was also trying to get their hands on Shia. To want to covet Hajime's "important" person, they are considered as "enemies." There was no need to pardon them or hold back. These guys had crossed the line not meant to be crossed.

Hajime and Shia readied their arms, and the monsters quickly ran towards the location of the fools who had woken them up.

* * *

"And that's happened. When we arrived at the specified location, there were a crowd of armed thugs, but Myuu herself wasn't there. From the very beginning, they probably thought of killing me and take Shia. For the time being, we massacred everyone except several of them since we wanted to ask Myuu's whereabouts… but they didn't know anything. I tortured the others to find where their hideout is… and the same thing happened."

"Not only me, they were also planning to kidnap Yue-san and Tio-san. That's why this time, we decided to give them a warning by crushing all of the things related to their organization…"

Yue and Tio, who heard Hajime and Shia's explanation as they moved. With an amazed expressions towards their constitution towards trouble, wondered how the normal date could have turned into something involving the underground organization of this big city.

"… So, we just need to look for a child called Myuu?"

"Yep. What I found from the questioning, was they are a considerably large organization… so there are a lot of facilities related to them. Will you help us?"

“Nn… leave it to me.”

“Hmm. This one will certainly do it if it’s something asked by Master.”

Yue and Tio unhesitatingly answered. Hajime told them what he found out in regards to the whereabouts of the underground organization’s hideouts. They then proceeded to search for Myuu and crush the organization in groups of two consisting Hajime-Yue and Shia-Tio. Hajime and Shia went separate ways because they thought it would be better to have someone acquainted to Myuu when they find her.

* * *

Nearby the outer wall of Commercial Ward, there was a place separated from Sightseeing and Craftsman Wards. It was a place where the government’s eyes couldn’t reach; a complete underworld, the dark side of this big city. It was dim despite it being daytime, and the people walked with gloomy atmosphere.

In the corner of the place, there was a seven story building. Although it was an employment agency on the surface, it was actually the headquarters of the biggest underground organization specializing in “people” trafficking, “Flithof.” Normally, the headquarters has an eerily and quiet atmosphere, but now, it was noisy with people wandering around. The expressions of the thug-like subordinates who served as messengers were perplexed and irritated, which then warped into fear.

Among tens of people that were always going in and out, two people clad in robes from head to toe slipped in during the confusion, and infiltrated Flithof’s headquarters without much difficulty. They advanced while avoiding people who were running around, and finally arriving before a conspicuous room at the highest floor. A man’s hoarse yell reverberated into the corridor through the door. Hearing him, the robed people quietly removed their hoods and moved stealthily.

“Stop fucking around around! Ah!? Say it again, you bastard!”

“Hii! L-like I reported before, the number of destroyed hideouts has exceeded 50. The attackers were two groups of a pair.”

“Then, what’s wrong with that? Are you saying Flithof will be destroyed by four shitty bastards? Aa?”

“Th-that’s not i— hmph!?”

Inside the room, when they thinking the yell had stopped, something let out thud! sound and silence ruled for a moment. Apparently, the man who was reporting was knocked down by the yelling man.

“You guys, no matter how you do it, bring back those shitty bastards before me, alive. I don’t care what state they are in as long as they are alive. If this keeps up, Flithof’s reputation will be ruined. That’s why I am going to let those bastards see hell while they are alive. It is necessary to show a warning to the others. I will reward the guy who can bring them here with five million Ruta! Five millions each! Tell this to all of the members of the organization!”

Because of the instructions of the man, the room became hectic. Just like what the man had instructed, all the members inside the room left to deliver the message to all of the members in the organization. The two eavesdroppers put their hoods on, looked at each other, nodded once. One of them took out a war-hammer on her back and took a pose.

The moment the person inside placed his hand on the door knob, the super-heavy war-hammer was swung with considerably centrifugal and gravitational force.

BaaaANNgG!!!

With a thunderous sound, the door was crushed into pieces. The man who was holding onto the doorknob had his right half crushed. In addition, the people behind him had their whole bodies pierced by the splinters, and were instantly had wounds them they were blown to the other side of the wall.

“There’s no need to inform your employees. The people in question have come.”

“Hmmm, this one will be responsible for people on the outside. Shia, finish this quickly, okay?”

“Thank you very much, Tio-san.”

The people who cultivated the tragedy and casually entered the room were Shia and Tio. Realizing the door had suddenly burst into pieces, and how his subordinates were blown away to the wall across the room; both done so effortlessly, the head of Flithof, Hansen, stiffened and stared wide-eyed. He regained his senses when he heard Shia’s and Tio’s voices. He then quickly took out his weapon and spoke like a Yakuza.

“…Ya bastards are the assailants, huh… That figures… Tch, ain’t ya da ones from da list. Shia and Tio was it? Da other one is the lil’ one, Yue… Indeed y’all’s appearances are first rate. Oi, y’all’s lives will be saved if ya surrender now, y’know? Don’t tell me, ya think ya can return alive after putting ur hands on Flithof’s headquart —!?” Swiiiish “UGYAAAA!!!”

Hansen, who began to speak while looking at Shia and Tio with lust, was coldly cut off by Shia, who fired the shotgun, since there was no need for discussion. The numerous iron balls blew off Hansen’s right arm, which spun and crashed into the wall behind, while guy himself screamed and crouched.

Though the organization members who heard the commotion came running, Tio used fire magic to burn the stairs and they could only stand still because they lost the only way up. Furthermore, she used the scaled-down version of “Breath,” casually mowing them down, and everything on seventh floor turned completely charred except Hansen’s room. With that, there was an unobstructed view of the Flithof’s headquarters. Tio fired Wind Blades and Fire Bullets, just like a machine gun, towards the organization members who could do nothing but vacantly look up at the upper floor. Because of the merciless attacks, the organization members tried to disperse and scattered about in escape… but only few survived.

While Tio handled the people outside, Shia shouldered Doryukken, approached the screaming and writhing Hansen, and pushed Doryukken to his abdomen. “Guwaa,” he let out sounds of agony as he tried to move the sledgehammer away, but his right hand was useless against the super heavy Doryukken. The only thing Hansen could do was ungracefully pleaded for his life.

“P-Please. Spare me! You can take as much money as you like! I don’t want to be involved with you anymore! That is wh— Gekk!?”

“Please don’t speak without permission. You only have to answer my question, understand? If you don’t, the weight will increase every second… so I recommend you answer everything before your organs burst.”

“… Shia. Thou art Master’s companion after all… Thy speech and behavior are the same.”

Tio, who retorted from behind, was ignored, and Shia asked Hansen about Myuu. When she mentioned Myuu, Hansen showed a dumbfounded expression for a moment. But when she asked about a child from the Sea-dweller tribe, he frantically answered with an anguished expression because Doryukken getting heavier by the second. Apparently, she had been transported to the basement of a hall where the underground auction would occur this evening.

Hansen’s subordinates, who probably heard the conversation between Shia’s party and Myuu, were the ones who planned on kidnapping Shia. They probably thought that by kidnapping her, they could raise their position inside the organization since she was already in the organization’s list to be kidnapped.

Shia touched the telepathy stone on her choker, activated it, and contacted Hajime.

“Hajime-san, Hajime-san. Can you hear me? It’s me, Shia.”

“…Shia. Yes, I can hear you. What’s wrong?”

“I just got the information on Myuu-chan’s whereabouts. Hajime-san is currently in Sightseeing Ward, right? Please go ahead because

it's around there."

"Roger."

Shia told Hajime the exact location using telepathy. Because of Doryukken's weight, Hansen's complexion had turned blue due to being unable to breathe. Shia deactivated the gravity magic in Doryukken, pulled the normal weighted Doryukken from Hansen and shouldered it. Though he was released from Doryukken's weight, Hansen's consciousness began to faint because of hemorrhage, and desperately asked for Shia's help.

"H-Help me… Take me to the doctor…"

"It's too convenient for you to use children's lives as food source… In addition, Hajime-san and Yue-san will be angry at me if I let a human like you escape. That's why, goodbye."

"S-Stop!"

Splatter!

Shia shook Doryukken that was swung mightily, to brush off the blood stuck on it, put it on her back, and faced Tio.

"Tio-san. Let's quickly crush this place and meet with Hajime-san and Yue-san!"

"Whoa… Shia is also merciless, huh… It made this one throbbed slightly…"

"?… Did you just say something?"

"N-Nothing at all."

The words Tio said in a whisper somehow made Shia feel a chill. Although when she asked Tio, there was nothing but her strange feverish expression, so Shia tilted her head as they continued to diligently destroy the Flithof's headquarters.

When Shia and Tio left, what remained was numerous corpses and a mountain of rubble. "Flithof" in Fhuren was one of the three biggest

underground organizations, and today, it was easily a annihilated.

# Chapter 9 : Hajime becomes a Papa III

After receiving the telepathy from Shia, Hajime and Yue rushed towards the informed location. Being sent to the auction, there was no need to worry about Myuu's life, but she must have quite the mental burden. Either way, they must rescue her quickly.

When they arrived at their destination, two huge men dressed in black was standing at the entrance. Thinking Myuu would be transported somewhere else if he made a commotion, Hajime moved to a back alley and used transmutation to infiltrate from the basement.

Accompanied by Yue, they moved quickly while using sign interception. It was truly a shame that there was no cardboard. As long as they have it, there would be no need to use sign interception skill…

Before long, numerous cages could be seen deep inside the basement. The only person who guarded the entrance was sleeping. They passed by the guard, and found around ten of human children inside who were cowering from the cold stone floor. Nine out of ten of these children were to be auctioned today.

In truth, because most humans were believer of Church of the Saints, it was forbidden to sell or turn humans into slaves. Even so, criminals among human race could become trade goods. It was okay to sell or enslave those who betrayed God. However, the trembling children before their eyes couldn't have possibly fall into such circumstances where they turned into criminals. To begin with, human who turned into slaves with regular procedures would not be sent to an auction. As such, they have been captured and to be sold illegally.

Hajime went over to the cage and met the gazes of the the children who were frightened by the silhouette that appeared all of a sudden. He then asked them in a calm voice.

“Was there a child from Sea-dweller tribe here?”

The frightened children must have thought it was their turn to be sold, so they looked at each other, puzzled by the unexpected question. Myuu’s figure was not inside the cage, that’s why Hajime he asked the children. He wondered whether there was another jail or she had already been taken out.

The children stayed silent for a while, but when Yue squatted down beside Hajime, looked at them with gentle eyes, and muttered, “… It’s okay.”

They looked slightly at ease, and one of boy with age of around seven to eight years old timidly answered Hajime’s question.

“That’s, the child from Sea-dweller tribe was taken a while ago… Onii-san, Onee-san, who are you?”

It was as he expected, she had already been taken out. Hajime inwardly clicked his tongue and answered the uneasy boy simply.

“We’ve come to rescue you.”

“Eh!? You are going to rescue us!?”

Hajime’s words made the boy inadvertently shout, and raised an astonished and joyed look. His voice resounded well inside the dim basement jail. Although the boy panickedly covered his mouth, the guard heard him, shouted, “What’s with the commotion!?” as he woke up and trotted into the basement jail.

Thus, he found Hajime’s party and stiffened for a moment before shouting, “Who are you bastards!?,” pulled a dagger and attacked them. The children screamed as they imagine visions of Hajime and Yue collapsing after being stabbed.

However, it was something impossible for it to happen. Hajime casually gripped the thrusted dagger with his left hand, put his strength into it, and crushed the blade. Hajime opened his palm and dropped the blade’s fragments. The guard could not register what happened, he was dumbfounded for a moment, and cast his gaze down to the dagger on his hand, but he could only see the handle.

Finally understanding what happened, the man turned pale and backed away while uttering, “Wh-Wh-.”

Hajime immediately grabbed the man’s head and threw him into the ground.

SQUIIIISH!

The man immediately died, accompanied with a raw sound.

“A guard should first ring the alarm.”

Saying such a thing with an amazed expression, Hajime who instantly killed the guard made the children pop-eyed in surprise. Without minding their gazes, Hajime used transmutation to disassemble the iron bars. In the children’s eyes, they saw the iron bars disappeared in an instant which made them stiffened, and their mouths were wide open with surprise.

“Sorry, Yue, but can I entrust them to you? Looks like I can’t do anything but rampage now.”

“Nn… leave them to me.”

“The security officers should arrives soon, too, so it’s okay to leave the children to them. The branch head, Ilwa will help us, too… Let’s leave the details to him.”

Yue was watching from a distance with a somewhat sympathized look. It was directed to the Guild Branch’s Head. Actually, before they came here, they had caught a suitable Adventurer to deliver the telepathy stone to Ilwa, since they thought to explain the situation to him. Status plate with “Gold”-rank was useful in such a time. Because after seeing Hajime’s color, the Adventurer stiffened for a moment and his attitude turned into a formal one… It was similar to how the Japanese greeted a Hollywood Star who came to the town. He even saluted as he agreed to listen to his request.

Incidentally, because telepathy stone could not be activated from Ilwa’s side, he was made to hear the report one-sidedly; about how they got in a fight against a huge underground organization, and that Hajime left the post-treatment to him which made his face

turned white in his office.

Hajime once again transmuted a passage from the oubliette to the surface, entrusted the children to Yue, and quickly went towards the auction hall. At the same time, the boy from before called Hajime to a stop.

“Nii-chan! Thank you for helping us! You can definitely save that girl too! She was truly frightened. Even I couldn’t do anything…”

Apparently, this boy didn’t care Myuu was a demi-human, and seemed to have tried to encourage her. He was quite the spirited boy, though he himself was caught. Hajime patted the head of the boy who felt bitter from his powerlessness.

“Wah, wh-what is it?”

“Well, if you feel it was mortifying, then you only have to become stronger. Rather, there’s nothing but to do that. This time is my turn, but next time it’s your turn if something comes up.”

After saying so, Hajime quickly turned his heels and went out of the oubliette. The boy held his patted head in blank surprise, had sparkling eyes in next moment, and clenched his fists with a slightly manly face. Yue gazed at the boy with pleased gaze and took the children to the surface.

* * *

The auction hall was wrapped in its own bizarre atmosphere.

The guests in the hall were around 100 people. All of them were wearing queer masks, and no one was making any noise. They only quietly raised placards with numbers when the merchandise they want was up for auction. They hesitated to speak because they didn’t want to be identified.

Even those guest who were carefully trying not to let any sound out, involuntarily raised their voices when “that” merchandise came out.

What appeared was a little girl from Sea-dweller tribe inside a

square water tank with a distance of two meters in all directions. She was stripped off her clothes, naked, and she shrunk her body as she held onto her knees in the corner of the water tank. Sea-dweller tribe could breathe inside water. It was the reason why she was put inside the water tank, to prove she was a genuine Sea-dweller. And maybe because she had escaped once, metallic shackles were put on her limbs. It was such a cruel sight for such small limbs.

The numerous gazes that frightened Myuu narrowed and began to compete. Her price went up at a ferocious pace. It was a one time thing, so they probably thought they would be able to buy and hid the Sea-dweller. It was possibly because they had yet to know the commotions that occurred in the daytime.

The noisy hall made Myuu shrink more and more, while clenching her hand that held a black cloth. It was Hajime's eyepatch. When they tried to separate from Myuu, they were too busy trying to calm Myuu down and it was forgotten. Hajime remembered it later, and he wore a spare eyepatch.

Hajime's eyepatch had became Myuu's small support. Being separated from her mother, forced to go through harsh travel, being put inside dark cage, soaked in the sewage, and she desperately ran away. When she thought it was the end, she was wrapped by something warm. She woke up due to a nice smell, and before her was a white-haired boy that wore the black cloth in one of his eyes. She quietly watched him in surprise, and when she tried to look away, he somehow turned to watch her. Myuu also became somewhat obstinate and returned his gaze, when a delicious smell she missed tickled her nose.

Afterwards, she answered when he asked her for her name, and when she saw beautiful red lights being emitted, she was put inside a warm bath. Then, a rabbit eared big sister with similar hair color as the boy — though there were some blue hues — washed her body. Unbeknownst to her, she called the big sister who introduced herself as Shia with "Onee-chan," due to the pleasant feeling from the warm bath and gentle washing.

Being held, sitting on her lap, while being able to eat the delicious meats, Myuu would surely not forget this throughout her life. She

was absorbed in being fed, and unbeknownst to her, the boy called Hajime had returned. Although she became slightly cautious, her cautiousness completely dissipated when he took out a lovely clothing, politely dressed her, and blowed her hair dry with warm and comfortable wind.

That's why she was very sad when she heard they would be separated because it was necessary to entrust her to the security office. After being separated from her mother while enduring the solitude and fear for a long time, Myuu didn't want to be separated from the gentle Onii-chan and Onee-chan she met in this faraway place. She wouldn't be able to endure being alone again.

Therefore, Myuu protested with all of her might. She pulled Hajime's hair, scratched his cheeks for so many times, and took the black cloth attached to his eye. She repeatedly said, Myuu wants to stay together! However, the Onii-chan and Onee-chan could not stay with Myuu and as the result, Myuu was left behind.

Myuu thought as her body shrunk more while thinking. As expected, am I left behind because I will be a pain? Are they mad because I took off this black cloth? Am I hated by Onii-chan and Onee-chan? She was very sad, and tears fell from her eyes. If I can meet them once again, I want to apologize for being a pain. I will return this black cloth, and this time… I want us to somehow stay together.

"Onii-chan… Onee-chan…" Myuu muttered when suddenly, the water tank let out a loud sound because of an impact.

"Eeek!," Myuu became frightened, looked at the surrounding, and she frowned. There was a masked-man in tuxedo nearby, and she noticed him shouting something as he repeatedly kicked the water tank. Apparently, he wanted to let the guests see her swim to further increase her price, and he kicked the water tank because he thought the unmoving Myuu was sleeping.

However, Myuu became even more frightened, further shrunk her body and didn't move at all. Shrinking her body while strongly clenching onto Hajime's eyepatch as she endured the impact sound and the shaking water tank.

The man who was the host of the underground auction and member of Flithof feared the unmoving Myuu was sick, which would drop her price, so he told a man to bring a rod. It was to be directly thrusted at her to forced her to move. He unintentionally cursed, and became impatient due to the noises made by the guests.

“Good grief, what an irritating brat. Don’t you trouble a human like me. You dimwitted blockhead!” The host climbed the stepladder, and tried to thrust the rod at Myuu. Myuu shut her eyes tightly and prepared for the impact.

However, instead of the impact… what reached her was the voice of a person she wanted to hear the most.

“I will return those words back at you, okay? You shitty bastard.”

In the next moment, a shadow fell, fluttered from the ceiling, and trampled the host’s head who was crushed along with the stepladder when it fell because of the momentum. Splash! Blood splattered from the host as though he had exploded. He was literally crushed to death.

The shadow, Hajime, who appeared with such an impact, didn’t even glance at the collapsed man, and hit the water tank with his artificial arm. Smash! The water tank was destroyed, accompanied with sound of something being crushed.

“Eeep!” Myuu was thrown outside along with the flowing water, and she screamed unintentionally.

Myuu was immediately caught by something warm, and she timidly opened her eyes. There was the person she wanted to meet, the one she helplessly expected to come when she heard his voice… He was certainly here. She was held by him. Myuu blinked and quietly watched Hajime just like the first time they met.

“Hey, Myuu. You, why are you always sopping wet when we meet?”

Hajime said jokingly, and quietly watched Myuu. She then asked him in a whisper.

“… Onii-chan?”

“I don’t know who is this Onii-chan is, but Hajime-san whose hair you pulled, cheeks you scratched, and eyepatch you took is certainly me.”

Hajime answered with a wry smile, and Myuu’s round pupil moistened. Following that…

“Onii-chan!!!”

She clung onto Hajime’s neck tightly and began to sob. Hajime had a troubled expression, and patted Myuu’s back. Afterwards, he agilely wrapped her in blanket.

And the two, Hajime and Myuu, who reunited once again near the water, were surrounded by men in black clothing who hurriedly rushed in. On the guests’ seats, there was a commotion and they wondered why Hajime didn’t immediately run away. However, even now, he didn’t look like he want to run away.

“Brat, looks like you aren’t that bright to lay your hands against Flithof. Leave that merchandise and I will give you a nice death, kay?”

Being surrounded by 20 strong looking men, Myuu raised her face from Hajime’s neck and looked up at him with uneasiness. Hajime draw his face closer to Myuu’s ear and whispered, It’ll be troublesome so close your ears and shut your eyes , and he placed Myuu’s small hand to close her ear. Even though Myuu wondered why, she nodded, and she felt at ease because Hajime had a calm attitude without any impatience or anxiety. She obediently used her hands to cover her ears, closed her eyes, and she buried her face in Hajime’s chest.

Veins popped on the forehead of the men in black when they were completely ignored, and shouted loudly, Don’t hurt the merchandise! And kill the brat! At the same time,

BOooOOoM!!!

With a dry explosive sound, the head of the leader of the men in

black burst. Everyone let out an “Eh?,” and became pop-eyed without being able to understand anything. They could only watch the man in black collapse with his brain matter scattered from the back of his head. Using that chance, Hajime further fired in succession. While everyone was stiffened due to not knowing what had happened, the sound of rapid-fire rang out, and when they regained their senses, the number of the corpse who had their head burst totaled to 12.

At that time, they finally noticed the boy before them was nothing ordinary, and the black-clothed men backed away while the guests began to flood the exits, screaming.

“Y-You, what are you! What, how… this—!”

Confused and trying to fight his fear, one of the men in black frantically acted brave by raising his voice. Ten more people came from the interior and flinched when they saw the disastrous scene in the hall.

Seeing them, Hajime snorted.

“Why you ask? Don’t you understand just by seeing me? I come here to take back the thing you took from me. Next… is only a warning from me. This will happen to those who takes something from me. That’s why, shall I make the ending a flashy one?”

Hajime said so and used “Aerodynamic” to go up to the ceiling of the hall and unbeknownst to others, he jumped outside from the hole and reached the roof.

“Yue. Myuu was safely secured. How’s the thing on your end?”

“… Nn, they have reached the shelter. The final will be after all the guests came out.”

“I see, then let’s make the Finale a flashy one.”

“Nn!”

Hajime used “Aerodynamic,” jumping further into the sky. Then, he spoke to Myuu who faithfully closed her ears and buried her face

into Hajime's chest. She blinked and looked at the surrounding when Hajime said, "It is okay now, Myuu," and… "Fuwah!?," she said with a surprised voice.

It couldn't be helped because when she opened her eyes, she was in the sky where she could see every part of the town. On the other side, the setting sun that seemed to be blazing, dying the evening sky in red. Above the ground were the man-made lights glittering, creating a beautiful illumination. Myuu's eyes sparkled seeing the magnificent spectacle for the first time and she held Hajime's chest while saying, Kyaa .

"Onii-chan is amazing! Onii-chan can fly in the sky!"

"Not fly, I just jump—… well whatever. More importantly, I will let Myuu watch some flashy fireworks now, okay?"

"Fireworks?"

"Fireworks is… something like explosion."

"Explosion?"

Though he could not give a good explanation, Hajime didn't mind it since the thing he need to do was still the same. While he holding Myuu with his right arm, he used "Aerodynamic" to stay in the sky, and took out a ring from "Treasure Box." It was a remote detonator of the bomb made with "Induction Stone." In fact, he had scattered the bombs into suitable locations while looking for Myuu.

"Well then, time to start. Ta~ma~ya~."

"Ta~ma~ya~?"

The moment Hajime and Myuu's voice resounded in the evening sky, tremendous roars rang the entirety of Fhuren and horrendous impact ran through buildings related to Flithof. Even the museum used as the underground auction hall where, Historical building? Work of arts? Are those delicious? , was said to be crushed to bits. Flames burst out into the sky along with the tremendous explosions. The surrounding buildings and the sky were dyed in red by something other than the evening sun.

“Eeeeh!?”

“What do you think, Myuu? Were you surprised?”

“Fireworks, scary.”

Myuu trembled because of the grand explosions, and frantically clung to Hajime.When it came down to the final blow, dark clouds suddenly began to shroud the sky slightly away from them. Following that, four “Thunder Dragons” appeared accompanied with thundering howls. The number had increased though their sizes were half from when there was only one.

The four “Thunder Dragons” Yue created scattered into different directions of the blazing red evening sky. Almost all of the people in Fhuren witnessed their majestic forms. The four Thunder Dragons let our thundering roars and “fell” at the same time onto four of Flithof’s important bases that were left behind. Their lightnings dyed the surrounding sky, and the roaring sound of collapsing building resounded within Fhuren. With bursting flames and the scattered dust, the sunset in Fhuren in addition to being dyed in red by flames was just like a town in a war-time after an air raid.

Incidentally, the common people unrelated to this event were unharmed. He had confirmed there was no one around unrelated to Flithof by using Unmanned Reconnaissance Planes into the related facilities and the buildings’ circumferences. The people who were blown off and turned to cinders were only those related to Flithof. Their identities, however, were unidentifiable.

“Hajime-san! Is Myuu-chan okay!?”

“Wa-wait Shia. Eh, that’s too fast!”

While he and Myuu was looking at the raising flames and smokes, a telepathy came from Shia. Since Hajime didn’t let Shia in on the details of what he was going to do, she was surprised by the explosions and the “Thunder Dragon”s, so she asked while panicking.

“It’s okay. She is safe. Looks like… those bastards’ bases are all

destroyed. Perhaps we should meet at the branch head, Ilwa's place though he might be screaming right now."

"Ha~, thank god~. Branch head's place, is it? Roger. I will immediately go there so please come quickly with Myuu-chan, okay?"

"Ah, okay. Then, see you there."

"Yes."

Because Hajime was suddenly looking at the distance in silent, Myuu looked at him in wonder. When Hajime said, "We will meet with Onee-chan soon, okay?," Myuu smiled happily while saying, "Onee-chan!".

Hajime, who descended to the surface, met up with Yue who had entrusted the children to the securities. She quietly watched Myuu who was held by Hajime. Myuu restlessly looking around, and then looked up at Hajime. Her eyes were saying, "Who is this person?"

"Myuu, she is Yue. My lover?"
"Eh? Lover? … Then, Shia-oneechan?"

"My companion."
"Not a lover?"

"Of course not."
"… No matter what?"

"I will say it again and again… my lover is Yue."
"Hmm~"

After being introduced to Yue, Myuu looking at Yue with a somewhat dissatisfied expression. Yue was still watching Myuu quietly. As if to ascertain something, Myuu returned Yue's gaze. The two were staring at each other for a while, but the balance unexpectedly broken. Yue was trotting closer to them.

"Uhh," Myuu was cautious. However, Yue didn't mind Myuu's cautiousness and took her away from Hajime. Yue made a Kyaa~ sound as she tightly embraced Myuu. "Ugh~" Although Myuu

groaned and tried to resist, Yue didn't let her go. After that, she said,

"… So cute."

Apparently, she had come to like Myuu very much. Hah Myuu, who finally caught her breath, raised her face, and she and Yue were looking at each other in a close range.

"… Myuu. I am Yue. You've tried your best alone. Truly admirable."

Yue's eyes gently soften, and patted Myuu's head while still embracing her saying, "Good girl, good girl." With her gentle hand and warm atmosphere, Myuu relaxed and tears began to flow. Then, she began to cry loudly, Waa— When she met Hajime again, she still felt the tension that's why she could not cry. However, at this moment, she relaxed and could let out all of her feelings completely.

With a wry smile, Hajime said, "As expected of Yue," and they waited until Myuu finished crying before heading towards Adventurer Guild's Branch Headquarters.

* * *

"Collapsed buildings, numbered twenty-two. Partially destroyed ones, numbered forty-four. Completely annihilated buildings, numbered five. Death of 95 members of Flithof confirmed. Disabled, numbered forty-four. Serious injuries, numbered twenty-eight, and 119 people are missing… Well? Do you have anything to say?"

"It went according to the plan. There's neither regret nor a thing to reflect on."

"Haa~~~"

Inside the Adventurer Guild's reception room, Ilwa was glaring at Hajime with a written report in hand. However, from hearing words without any hint of remorse to the figure of a little girl from the Sea-dweller tribe who was eating the tea cake while hitting on his laps made Ilwa felt completely exhausted.

“Although I thought it couldn’t be… I heard Lehman escaped from Meerstat by destroying the water tank and walls, then flew to the sky… It wasn’t not your doing, right?”

“… Myuu, this is delicious, too, you know? Try eating it.”

“Ah~n.”

Although Hajime calmly fed Myuu the cake, Ilwa didn’t missed Shia, who was sitting beside him, wavering for a moment. Thus, he once again let out a very , very deep sigh. He rubbed his stomach with a hand, and the head secretary, Datt, casually handed him some stomach medication.

“Well, I won’t deny that I felt you overdid it, however, we are also troubled by the underground organization… So I can honestly say you helped us in this matter. They always cleared any evidence, with their outward appearance being a legitimate company, and they could just cut off arrested the ones like a lizard’s tail… Frankly, their extermination was a dream for us… But with the balance of the underground world collapsing… Haa, it will need serious cooperation between the Security Bureau and the Adventurers.”

“Well, that originally should’ve been managed by Fhuren’s Administrators. This matter only involved us because by some chance, someone wanted to put their hands on us so we counterattacked…”

“For a counterattack, how did it became annihilating one of three biggest underground organizations based in Fhuren in just half a day? Seriously, I can’t even joke about it.”

Ilwa smiled bitterly and somehow looked like he aged for at least ten more years. Because Hajime felt he was pitiful, he make a proposal to Ilwa.

“We gave those criminal groups such a grand warning, making them think twice of ever trying to meddle with us again. Also, it’s okay for Branch Head to use our names, you know? After all, if it’s known that the Branch Head was the one who hired “Gold” ranks…

It'll be a good deterrent, right?"

"Oya, is it really okay? It will surely become a big help… but aren't you the type who dislikes being used?

Ilwa's expression says he wasn't expecting Hajime's words. However, his eyes clearly said, "Eh? Seriously? Of course I will!" Hajime shrugged his shoulders and smiled wryly.

"Well, it is a give-and-take. We have troubled you, that's why I don't mind it if it's just that much. I also know you, the Branch Head, will use it with caution. Besides, Fhuren will be involved in a war between underground organizations because of us, and I feel bad to involve the ordinary people."

"… Hmm. Hajime-kun, aren't you changing slightly? When I first met you, I had a feeling you had no consideration for anyone beside your companions… Did something good happened in Ul?"

"… Well, at least it was not only bad things that happened there."

As expected of this big city's Guild Branch Head, he could clearly judged people. He was able to notice the slight change in Hajime. Since this change was also desirable for Ilwa, he gratefully accepted Hajime's proposal

Later on, although the two organizations planned on raising their influences by taking advantage of Flithof's annihilation, it didn't become just a big when thanks you Ilwa's effective use of the names of Hajime's party similar to how adults would scare children by saying "Namahage will come~" But because of this, Hajime gained various nicknames such as "Right-hand man of Fhuren's Branch Head," "White-haired, eye-patch, blazing flame-user," and "Little girl-killer"… However, Hajime didn't know of it, and it's no big deal if he had no knowledge of it.

[T/N: Namahage is a demon-like being, portrayed by men wearing hefty orge masks and traditional straw capes during a New Year's ritual.]

In regards to dealing with Hajime's party who caused such a grand

rampage, thanks to Ilwa's effort, connections, and the unexpected help from the Security Bureau who defends the public peace, it became a legitimate case of self-defence. Thus, there was no problem at all. Apparently, even for the Security Bureau, the case where a child they were entrusted with was kidnapped, along with the bombing of one of their office, had become quite a hit on the head.

In addition, they could not tolerate the underground organization which kept doing illegal acts while making a mockery of them. The bureau director came to greet Hajime's party with truly manly smile to conclude all things, and when he left, somehow his steps were light as though it was humming, "La dida dida."

"Next, about Myuu-kun…"

Ilwa turned his gaze towards Myuu who was munching a cookie she held with both hands like a squirrel. Myuu twitched because of his gaze, uneasily looking up at Hajime, Yue, and Shia due to not wanting to be separated again. The reason she didn't look at Tio was… it was the elders' role to prevent a child from seeing something harmful.

"She could be entrusted to us and be sent to Elisen according to the legal procedures, or she could be entrusted you to be returned in a form of a commission… Those two are the only ways. What will you choose?"

Hajime inclined his head and wondered if it was okay not to entrust the kidnapped child of Sea-dweller tribe to the officials. According to Ilwa's explanation, it would be okay to leave her to them because from the beginning, the "Gold"s' rampage was to protect her, Myuu.

"Hajime-san… I, will, absolutely protect this child. That's why, let her come with us… please."

Shia bowed her head to Hajime. By all means she wanted to be together with Myuu until she was safely returned. Yue and Tio was watching Hajime in silence, leaving the decision up to Hajime.

"Onii-chan… stay together… please?"

It was foul play to say, “Please?,” while sending an upward gaze from his own lap. More importantly, when he got Myuu back, he had already considered to take her along if she wished for it, so his decision had been made.

“Well, it would have been be a big help in beginning… But now, I hold her dear so I can’t just say something like goodbye.”

“Hajime-san!”

“Onii-chan!”

Shia and Myuu were elated and smiled widely. Although it was necessary to conquer the Great Dungeon in «Great Volcano» before they travel to «Seaside town, Elisen», Hajime decided to allow Myuu to accompany and determined in his mind, “Well, we’ll manage somehow.”

“However, Myuu. Can you stop calling me Onii-chan? It’s okay to just call me Hajime. What can I say, the way you call me make me itch.”

Because Myuu was hugging him in joy, Hajime said his demand while feeling half embarrassed. For an otaku to be called “Onii-chan”… various things might happen.

Hajime’s demand made Myuu puzzled for a moment, but before long she nodded as though she understood it… and she answered with something completely different from what everyone had expected.

“… Papa.”

“… Wh-What? Sorry, Myuu. I seems I didn’t hear it correctly. Please say it again.”

“Papa.”

“… I-it must be that, right? A word that means “Onii-chan” or “Hajime” in Sea-dweller tribe’s language, right?”

“Ah-uh. Papa is papa.”

“Um, wait a sec.”

Hajime used his hand to massage his forehead and Shia timidly asked Myuu why she used the word “Papa” to call Hajime. Then…

“You know, Myuu doesn’t have a Papa… He had gone to where the God is before Myuu was born… Ki-chan, Lu-chan, and Mi-chan have theirs but only Myuu doesn’t… That’s why Onii-chan is Papa.”

“I somehow understand, but I want to tsukkomi your “that’s why,” Myuu. Please anything but Papa. I’m still only 17 years old, you know.”

“No, it’s Papa!”

“Okay. Then Onii-chan is okay! I don’t want such an extravagance title, so stop with Papa!”

“Nooo!! Papa is Myuu’s Papa—!”

Afterwards, he tried various things to get Myuu to stop calling him “Papa,” but Myuu displayed unexpected stubbornness, even more than the time she called him Onii-chan, and as the result, it was not revoked. As such, he could do nothing but made her mother persuade her when they arrived in Elisen. Hajime’s expression looked like he was suffering his greatest damage since the time he came out of the Abyss.

The the discussion with Ilwa was over, they returned to the inn, and a dispute broke out in regards to whom would be called “Mama” by Myuu, and for the time being, Tio who would become a bad influence to Myuum was rolling on the floor because Hajime had tied her. Naturally, she was excited by it…

In the end, she didn’t want to call anyone “Mama” except her real Mama, so Yue, Shia, and even Tio settled with “Onee-chan.”

Then at the night, everyone slept together in a kawa-no-ji style because Myuu wished for it. Once again problem occurred on who would sleep beside Myuu and across Hajime. However, the exhausted Hajime made Myuu sleep in between him and Yue. Shia was dissatisfied by this and threw a tantrum, but somehow she was

able to sleep after she finished saying all of her complaints.

That day, the 17 years old Hajime became a Papa… and now the journey together with a child began!

* * *

Extra

Yue : “… Hajime.”

Hajime : “Nn? What is it, Yue?”

Yue : “… I want a child.”

Hajime : “… (Sweat drips ).”

Yue : “… Jiii— (Silently appealing with her eyes ).”

Hajime : “… Someday.”

Yue : “Nn!”

Shia : “That’s~, Hajime san… me, too (Fidget, fidget ).”

Hajime : “… I won’t.”

Tio : “Master, this o— ”

Hajime: “Only those existing can joke around”

Tio : “… Haa, haa. Only this one got an immediate reply… Moreover, a merciless one… Haa, haa… I can’t hold it anymore!”

# Chapter 10 : An Abnormal Situation

Intense weapons clashing, and explosion sounds rang out inside the dim underground dungeon, with only a faint green light to rely upon.

It was so intense that it could be described as severe, and even the far distant wall shook from time to time. Numerous silver-colored sword trails were beautifully drawn in the empty space. Flame bullets, flame spears, wind blades, and water lasers flew about like a barrage. Sound of something hitting tough flesh, angry roars for their companions, and war cries filled the should be silent space suddenly turning into a battlefield.

“O light cutting through all creation, wind bring forth destruction, scatters and dances around like a whirlpool, and become the storm of light that cut my enemies! Soaring Severation !”

The Holy Sword he had in his hand, along with his wrist blurring as they accelerated, and numerous swords of light released with him, Kouki, as the core. The attacking bat-like demonic beast with the length of about 50 centimeters was instantly cut into ten pieces, and fell into the ground without being able to successfully attack as its blood splattered.

“Vanguard! Counting, ten—!”
“””Roger!”””

Ant-like demonic beasts that moved their jaws, bat-like flying demonic beasts, and sea anemone-like demonic beasts with numerous wriggling tentacles; hey wriggled and moved around inside the 30 meters in diameter round shaped room. The demonic beasts were coming from the eight tunnels all around the room.

This place was «Orcus Great Dungeon» 89th floor. The vanguards, Kouki, Ryuutarou, Shizuku, Nagayama, Hiyama, and Kondou, were matching the countdown timing of the rear guard’s all out magic attack. The demonic beasts, which managed to attack the rear

guards, were repelled and defeated by Kouki and the vanguards as they wait for the countdown.

The troublesome bat-like flying demonic beasts rushed to attack the rear guards using the space between the vanguards' defense, but were stopped thanks to rampart made by the reliable "Barrier-user."

"O' ephemeral storm, O' invisible shield; rage, blow, swirl, and stop everything, "Wall of Furious Tempest"!"

Taniguchi Suzu activated the offensive defense magic. The chanted spell went right before the rearguards, and breeze could be felt by their outstretched hands. No change could be seen with naked eyes. Even the bat-like demonic beasts didn't notice its presence, and were not alarmed by their instinct. They kept trying to attack the rear-guards who were about to activate large-scale attack magic spells.

However, before they reached, what met the charging demonic beasts was a wall of air that looked like a huge distortion of space appearing all of a sudden. Tens of those bat-like demonic beasts collided against the wall one after another, but the wall of air only bent without letting even one through.

When all of the charging bat-like demonic beasts had collided, the distorted space exploded, causing great impact as if it had reached its limit. The generated impact was tremendous, and the fleshes crushed by it immediately splattered on the dungeon's walls with sound of raw and death. Splatter !

"Hmph! I won't let you pass that easily!"

The voice of the class's mood-maker, Suzu, rang in the middle of the intense sound of battle. At the same time, the rear guards simultaneously fired their best attacks. It was an attack where it was necessary for them to be at a distance, since it would defeat the enemies, and struck all those who are close to it.

"Retreat!" With Kouki's order, the vanguards immediately backed away from the demonic beasts.

In the next moment, the magic attacks of six people arrived with such perfect timing.

A huge fireball crashed and simultaneously caused a huge explosion. Meanwhile, a tornado trampled the battlefield, bringing forth vacuum blades which sucked the demonic beasts and cut them up. On the ground, stone spears shot off with tremendous speed and pierced the demonic beasts' lower parts. At the same time, the icicles falling from above created holes in the demonic beasts' upper bodies.

There was no way a living thing would be able to survive inside the sublime space that looked like it was receiving the wrath of nature. The attacks only last for tens of seconds. However, more than 90% of the demonic beasts were dead while the rest were on verge of dying due to grave injuries.

"Alright! This is good! Let's finish the leftover ones quickly!"

With Kouki's shout, the vanguards once again went forwards, and the demonic beasts on the brink of death, couldn't even fight back thanks to the all-out magic attacks, were finished one by one. Not even five minutes had passed when all of the demonic beasts were annihilated.

The battle ended, but Kouki's party didn't relax their guards and searched their surroundings to see if there were more enemies.

"Phew, next is the 90th floor, huh… We were able to defeat the demonic beasts in this floor without much difficulty… and it looks like the end of the combat training inside this dungeon is near."

"That's why; don't let your guard down. After all, we don't know what kind of demonic beasts and traps are ahead."

"Aren't you worrying too much about it, Shizuku? Didn't we just an easy battle in a floor no one ever reached? No matter what may come, I will defeat them! Even if it's the Demon race!"

Shizuku cautioned Kouki, who muttered so in deep thought, and the muscle headed Ryuutarou replied with a hearty laugh. Nevertheless,

Kouki made fist-to-fist greeting with Ryuutarou, and revealed a fearless smile. Seeing them, Shizuku sighed while rubbing her creased forehead. She came and had followed the extremeness of the two, which ascended her to a stage of a wordly-wise man. My wrinkle hasn't increased again, right? , was her worry as the number of times Shizuku looked in a mirror had sublimely increased. Even so, she didn't restrict the two as she followed them; truly a good natured person.

* * *

"Hiyama-kun, Kondou-kun, I think you must have recovered by now. But… how are you?"

While the others were discussing the earlier battle, Kaori was doing her duty; to heal the injured people from previous battle, since she was a "Healer." It should be noted that there was another girl with "Healer" class within the 15 people who had undergone combat training by conquering the dungeon, and the duty to heal was divided between the two.

"… Aah, there's no problem now. Thank you, Shirasaki."

"O-Oh, it's okay now. Thanks."

Himaya, who was healed by Kaori, was daydreaming due to the close proximity of Kaori's face, and answered absentmindedly. It was obvious he was charmed by her. Even Kondou was saying his gratitude with his reddened ears. Because they were the vanguards, Hiyama and Kondou were frequently in care of Kaori's healing, and yet they still could not get used to coming in contact with Kaori. Although Kondou's attitude was just like a child in puberty… there was darkness inside Hiyama's eyes when he looked at Kaori. The darkness became thicker as days go by… but almost no one noticed it.

Hearing their gratitude, Kaori said, "You're welcome," with a smile. Then, she stood and turned around. When she confirmed no one else was in need of healing, she secretly sighed, and she began to look at the dim passage ahead with eyes filled with anxiety.

"…"

Noticing Kaori's state, Shizuku understood what her best friend felt. Kaori's mind was filled with worries. There were ten more floors until the lowest floor (the general opinion), yet they didn't find any sign of Hajime at all.

Although it meant there was hope, the despair was far stronger. Even if she decided to not believe Hajime was dead until she saw it herself, another floor was conquered, and the negative thoughts that surged when nothing was found, could not be easily put aside. Furthermore, four months had passed since the day Hajime fell into the abyss. Even if her determination was strong, it was enough time for negative thoughts to begin invading her mind.

Seeing Kaori's appearance while she embraced her artifact, a white staff, tightly, Shizuku called out to her since she could no longer endure it. And, before Shizuku moved, the small mood-maker said, As if I will let Kaori keep worrying like that! , and ran towards her. Bounce , she jumped and embraced Kaori from behind.

"KA-O-RI~N!! There's no need to heal those guys, just heal Suzu a, lot~! Heal me with this and that~"

"Hya! Suzu-chan! Where are you touching! Rather, Suzu-chan should not have any injury!"

"There is! Suzu's glass-like heart is injured! That's why, spoil me! To put it concretely, use Kaorin's big breasts!"

"B-Brea—… I said stop! Ah, hey! Yanh! Shizuku-chan, help!"

"Haa, Haa, is this good? How about over here? Young lady, you are quite th-puuutt !?"

"… Haa, stop it already, Suzu. I know you don't mind the boys' gaze… But, you should…"

Suzu had transformed into a perverted old man and was groping Kaori's breasts with an expression so sloppy that it couldn't be shown to other human. It was the reason why she received a head chop from Shizuku, and collapsed. Incidentally, some of the guys

who watched Suzu and Kaori's yuri scene had also collapsed. Suzu was convulsing with lump on her head, and was looked after by Nakamura Eri with a wry smile.

"Uu~, thank you, Shizuku-chan. That was embarrassing…"

"Alright, alright. It is okay now. I have exterminated the pervert, okay?"

Kaori, who clung to her with teary eyes, was gently patted by Shizuku. It was scene that could often be seen recently. Shizuku took a look at Kaori's complexion while she gently stroked Kaori's silky hair. Kaori was looking at Eri who was looking after Suzu with troubled but somewhat happy expression, and her anxiety from before was no longer there. Apparently, her feeling had changed even if it was a temporary thing. One way or another, Shizuku felt admiration in her mind as she thought, As expected of the class's moodmaker, Suzu (Oldman version).

"There are only ten floors left… Let's do our best, Kaori."

Shizuku put her hands on Kaori's shoulders, and then put some strength into them as she looked straight at Kaori. It was her way to encourage her best friend, so she would not break. Seeing Shizuku, Kaori noticed she had become slightly more timid, so she slapped both of her cheeks and returned Shizuku's gaze with a powerful gaze.

"Un. Thank you, Shizuku-chan."

Shizuku's worry made Kaori realized again how much Shizuku would support her, and Kaori conveyed her gratitude as her gaze softened as she smiled. Shizuku quietly nodded, and her gaze also softened… Lily flowers were blooming on their sides, but they didn't notice it. Kouki and others who were looking around awkwardly were also unnoticed by Shizuku and Kaori. They were already in their own world after all.

"If it is now… can I protect him?"

"I see… I am sure you can. We are different from that time… Even

our levels have surpassed Meld-san and the other Knights… However, hehe, isn't it possible that he has also became stronger? Even that time, he was the one who helped us in the end."

"Haha, jeez… Shizuku-chan…"

Kaori believed in Hajime's survival, but she was looking down on her current self, wondering if she could protect him this time, and that's why Shizuku was poking fun at her as a joke. Actually, they would be dumbfounded for various reasons when they found their target… But that is something for the near future.

Incidentally, the ones here were Kouki, Ryuutarou, Shizuku, Kaori, Suzu, Eri, five people including Nagayama Juugo, and Hiyama's gang of four; a total of 15 people, while Meld and the Knights were standing by at 70th floor. Actually, they were able to start from the 70th floor, since a teleport magic circle that connected 30th and 70th floor was discovered. Though it became easier to move to the lower floor, 70th floor was the limit for Meld and the Knights. To begin with, there were only Meld and few others who could keep up while accompanied by Kouki's party when they were around the 60th floor. Thus, they had only become a hindrance to Kouki's party when they reached 70th floor.

Even Meld was conscious of that. He taught Kouki's party of all the know-how about the dungeon. That's why, he and the Knights decided to try their best to secure a safety zone around the teleportation circle, and only Kouki's party were to move on.

Meld wanted to show a bitter smile due to being exceeded in only four months. But even so, after associating with Kouki's party, he and the Knights were satisfied if their abilities could safely secure a safety zone in 70th floor.

Kouki's party current statuses were something like the following:

Name: Kouki
Age: 17 Years Old
Gender: Male
Class: Healer
Strength: 880
Agility: 886

Magic Resistance
Skills
All Elements Aptitude:
Rise in Light Element's Effectiveness
Activation Speed Increase
All Elements Resistance:
Rise in Light Element's Effectiveness
Physical Resistance;
Recovery Rate Increase
Mitigation of Impact
Composite Magic
Swordsmanship
Herculean Strength
Ground Shrinker
Prediction
High Speed Magic Power Recovery
Sign Perception
Magic Perception
Limit Break
Language Comprehension

Fist Fighter

Magic Resistance
Skills
Hand-to-Hand Fighting Techniques:
Body Strengthening
Part Strengthening
Concentrated Strengthening
Penetrate and Destroy
Ground Shrinker
Physical Resistance:
Varja
All Element Resistance
Language Comprehension

Swordswoman

Vitality
Strength
Agility
Endurance
Magic
Magic Resistance
Skills
Swordsmanship:
Rise in Slashing Speed
Rise in Sword Drawing Speed
Ground Shrinker:
Great Ground Shrinker
Quivering Legs
No Beat
Prediction
Sign Perception
Stealth:
Phantom Attack
Language Comprehension
Vitality
Strength
Agility
Endurance
Magic
Magic Resistance
Skills
Healing Magic:
Increase in Effectiveness
Increase Healing Rate
Increase Imaginative Ability
Permeation Detection
Increase Effective Range
Increase in Effectiveness of Distance Healing
Increase in Effectiveness of Abnormal State Recovery
Decrease in Magic Consumption
Increase in Magic Power Efficiency
Continuous Activation
Simultaneous Activation
Delayed Activation
Additional Activation
Light Element Aptitude:
Increase in Activation Speed
Increase Effectiveness

Increase Duration
Continuous Activation
Simultaneous Activation
Delayed Activation
High Speed Magic Power Recovery:
Meditation
Language Comprehension

Kaori's Healing Magic and Light Element Aptitude skills were at the extreme. Her healing magic in particular was in the highest rank possible. Just judging by the amount of skills, Kaori's was at least amounted to four people. Furthermore, her current number of skills even exceeded the Hero, Kouki. With tit for tat, everything was definitely for her promise. Believing in his survival, this time, she would be the one to protect him. It was the result of her single-mindedly repeated the things she could do while spared little time for sleep.

"I think it's about the time to leave… Is it okay now?"

Kouki timidly called out to Kaori and Shizuku, who were still looking at each other. Before, he had witnessed Kaori and Shizuku embracing each other in Kaori's room, so sometimes Kouki's attitude became suspicious, which had taken Kaori aback, but Shizuku knew what was in his mind and only quietly watched him. Her eyes were truly expressing, "Until when are you going to keep this strange misunderstanding, you fool."

Pretending he didn't notice Shizuku's gaze, Kouki ordered the other members. They had explored 90% of the 89th floor, and the route they were to go now was the last place to explore. Thinking about the structure of the floors up until now, it was about time for them to see the stairs.

The prediction turned out right, and the party discovered the stairs 10 minutes after they moved out. They descended the dim, spiral staircase while confirming the existence of trap. After they descended for around 10 meters, Kouki's party arrived at the 90th floor.

For now, Kouki's party were looking in vigilance for anything that

might happen since it was the starting point. However, just by its external appearance, nothing had changed from 80th-ish floors they had just finished exploring. They immediately began their exploration while mapping. Even if the structure was the same, but they could not let their guard down because the demonic beasts that would appear might be strong ones.

In vigilance, Kouki's party explored the passages and rooms with the same structure as before. The exploration progressed easily. Or so it should be, because before long, one by one they made doubtful expressions.

"…What's with this?"

By the time the party reached a deep inside broad space, the incomprehensible feeling reached its peak, and Kouki leaked a questioning voice with a perplexed expression. The other members were also perplexed just like him, so they halted when Kouki asked the question.

"… Even though we have explored it so much, why we didn't encounter even one demonic beast?"

Their exploration had reached the latter half part, excluding the unneeded passages. Up until now, they would not have been able to advance this easily since they were furiously attacked by strong demonic beasts. Normally, they needed two days to reach the latter half of a floor. However, not even three hours had passed since Kouki's party started exploring the 90th floor. The reason for this progress was simple. They didn't encounter even one demonic beast in this floor.

In the beginning, they thought the demonic beasts were observing Kouki's party from the shadows, but nothing popped up even when they used their perception skills and magic spells. It was strange for them not even feel the presence of a single demonic beast. It was obviously an abnormal situation.

"…How to say it, it feels eerie. Was nothing here since the beginning?"

Similar to Ryuutarou, the other members also talked about the other possibilities which remain unsolved. Their confusion only deepened.

"… Kouki, shouldn't we return for now? Somehow I feel an ominous premonition. Meld and Knights might know something about this situation."

Shizuku suggested to Kouki while she strengthened her vigilance. Kouki considered Shizuku's suggestion because he also had a bad feeling about it, but they must keep advancing no matter what happens, and he thought they would be fine because they could take it easy in the 89th floor, so he hesitated on answering.

While Kouki was hesitating, the party members who explored the nearby surroundings unexpectedly raised their voice when they found something.

"This is… blood…, right?"

"It is hard to discern since the blood assimilate with the color of dim wall… They are all over the wall."

"Oi, oi… this… this is quite the amount."

Nagayama advanced from within the paled party members, and he touched the liquid they thought as blood with his finger. Afterwards, he confirmed the details by looking and smelling the blood stuck on his finger.

"Amanogawa… we should follow Yaegashi's suggestion… This is demonic beast's blood. Furthermore, it still fresh."

"Well, if that is demonic beast's blood, it means the demonic beasts around her have all been killed. Not only that, it also means there's strong one who did it… But, won't we be unable to advance unless we defeat it?"

Nagayama shook his head towards Kouki's rebuttal. Even though Nagayama was the second biggest after Ryuutarou, he had a very prudent character unlike the other one. Nagayama watched the surrounding carefully while being prepared for battle, and told

Kouki what he thought about the situation.

“Amanogawa… the demonic beast is likely not to go out of this room alone. We also haven’t even encountered one in the passages and rooms up until now. In addition, it is the first time we discovered traces. In other words…”

“… Something must have hidden the traces of the attacked demonic beasts, right?”

Nagayama nodded at Shizuku’s words. Even Kouki’s expression showed he realized something because of those words. Then, just like Nagayama, he raised his vigilance to the maximum with a stern expression.

“There’s also the possibility of demonic beasts becoming more intelligent… But, it was natural to think someone was here… In addition, for only traces in this room not to be hidden, either it means it didn’t have the time to do it, or…”

“Here is the last stop.”

What succeeded Kouki’s words was a never heard before voice of a woman suddenly ringing out. It was a man-like husky voice. Kouki’s party became pop-eyed, and they immediately entered battle state. They turned their gazes towards the source of the voice.

Sound of footsteps resounded, but what appeared from deep within the darkness of the spacious hall was a young woman with blazing red hair. The woman’s ears were slightly pointed, and her skin was darkish.

Kouki’s party opened their eyes wide in astonishment. The woman’s features were something they know very well. Though they have never seen it before, it was a race’s characteristics that always appeared inside the lecture from Ishtal and the others — the enemy of the Church of Saints’ God, and also the arch-enemy of human race. It was…

“…Demon race.”

Someone muttered, and the woman from Demon race revealed a

faint, cold smile.